FAITH IN THE SUNSHINE STATE

JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN AND THE RELIGIOUS CULTURE OF QUEENSLAND

by

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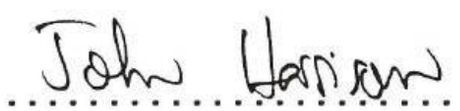
The work presented in this thesis is to the best of my knowledge and belief, original, except as acknowledged in the text, and the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.



John Harrison.

ABSTRACT

This study is an exploration of the significance of religious factors in the political philosophy and policies of Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, Premier of Queensland 1968-1987. The study is presented in four sections. The first section examines the manner in which the religious culture of Queensland was formed in the nineteenth century, giving particular attention to three influences. First, the historical roots of pietist influence in Queensland, its trans-sectarian character, and its relationship to fundamentalism. Secondly, the impact of distance on the development of ecclesiastical structures and the way this reinforced pietistic conceptions of religion in Queensland. Thirdly, the promotion - since the earliest days of free settlement in the colony of Moreton Bay - of a doctrine of `prosperity theology´ which was not simply a theological justification for an already existing secular idea, but which may have been formative in the evolution of the notion of `development´, a notion political scientists have discerned to be one of the foundations of the political culture of Queensland.

The second section follows Bjelke-Petersen´s religious and political formation in the South Burnett district of

Queensland through his youth and early adulthood; his entry to Parliament; his years on the backbench in both Opposition and Government; his accession to Cabinet and ultimately to the premiership. Attention is given to the way in which the Lutheran tradition was mediated to Bjelke-Petersen during his formative years, not only by his parents, but also by his religious and political mentors, as they formed part of the religious culture of the South Burnett district. Here Bjelke-Petersen's clear affinity with the dominant characteristics of the religious culture prevailing in Queensland is identified.

The third section focuses on the years of Bjelke-Petersen's premiership and upon the emergence of a challenge in religious terms not only to Bjelke-Petersen and some of the policies of his administration, but also to the prevailing ethos of the religious culture of Queensland. This challenge addressed issues of human rights and civil liberties, aboriginal land rights, industrial relations, human relationships and electoral justice.

The fourth section traces the reassertion during the nineteen seventies and nineteen eighties of pietist influences within the religious culture of Queensland in the form of fundamentalism and neo-pentecostalism, as

well as the continuing religious resistance to some of the policies of Bjelke-Petersen and his administration.

Finally, it is argued that the character of pietism and neo-pietism in Queensland along with Bjelke-Petersen's populist and messianic self perception contributed to the emergence of a new form of civil religion during the years of his premiership. This civil religion has been styled a "faith in the Sunshine State."

He alone, he told himself, was ready to meet trouble when it came. he alone had a sense of responsibility for everything that happened on the field, whether it was getting a fair deal for his own men or guarding a young girl from a waster who would bring her to ruin. He saw himself as the one man who had the will and capacity to carry the burdens of the whole community on his shoulders...
Most people were like cattle. They liked to travel together in a herd. They would leave their common affairs in the hands of anyone who had the guts to reach out and take charge of them. You give us the lead and we'll follow. You like striking out ahead and finding the track, you're made that way. Anything you decide on's all right with us.

Macy Donovan, the North Queensland union organiser who became Premier in Vance Palmer's novel *Golconda*.

If coercion, self assertion and conflict are regarded as permissible and necessary instruments of social redemption, how are perpetual conflict and perennial tyranny to be avoided?

Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral man, immoral society. A study in ethics and politics.*

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABC: Australian Broadcasting Corporation (formerly the Australian Broadcasting Commission.)
ACC: Australian Council of Churches.
AIF: Australian Imperial Forces.
ALP: Australian Labor Party.
AOG: Assemblies of God.
AWD: Action for World Development.
BCF: Brisbane Christian Fellowship.
BOEMAR: Board Of Ecumenical Mission And Relation (of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.)
CARE: Campaign Against Regressive Education.
CLC: Christian Life Centre.
CM: *Courier-Mail*.
COC: Christian Outreach Centre.
CSF: Creation Science Foundation.
CSO: Community Standards Organisation.
DAA: (Commonwealth) Department of Aboriginal Affairs.
DAIA: (Queensland) Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement.
DLP: Democratic Labor Party.
ELSA: Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia.
ELCA: Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia.
ELSQ: Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Queensland.
FGBFI: Full Gospel Businessmens' Fellowship International.
FOL: Festival of Light.
ICCC: International Council of Christian Churches.
KH: *Kingaroy Herald*.
LYPS: Lutheran Young Peoples' Society.
MACOS: Man: A Course Of Study.
MHR: Member of the House of Representatives.
MLA: Member of the Legislative Assembly.
NCC: National Civic Council.
NPA: National Party of Australia.
PCQ: Presbyterian Church of Queensland.
QBFC: Queensland-British Food Corporation.
QCC: Queensland Council of Churches.
QECC: Queensland Ecumenical Council of Churches.
QTTC: Queensland Tourism and Travel Corporation.
RSL: Returned Services League.
SDA: Seventh Day Adventist.
SEMP: Social Education Materials Project.
SEQEB: South East Queensland Electricity Board.
SM: *Sunday Mail*.
STOP: Society to Outlaw Pornography.
TLC: Trades and Labor Council.
UCA: Uniting Church in Australia.
UELCA: United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia.
WCC: World Council of Churches.

PART I.

THE RELIGIOUS CULTURE OF QUEENSLAND

CHAPTER 1.

A BIBLE BASHING BASTARD?

Every day I seek God's blessing. I find that necessary. I also do meditation. And I never miss church on a Sunday, no matter where I am. I have...a trust...in the basis of Bible teaching. I believe it, my word I do.

Joh Bjelke-Petersen 1977.[1]

Summonses ...were issued out of the Brisbane Magistrates Court this morning against Sir Johannes Bjelke-Petersen charging him with one count of official corruption and two counts of perjury.

Doug Drummond Q.C.1990.[2]

I.

Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, Premier of Queensland from 1968 to 1987, was a paradox.[3] During his premiership, the paradoxical character of both the man and his milieu were recognized by the press, his political opponents and the general public alike. In a *Penthouse* magazine profile of Bjelke-Petersen following the 1980 Queensland State election, journalist David Rolls wrote:

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[1] P.Muston, "A Christian in politics. The background of a premier" *On Being* (February-March,1977) 5-6.
[2] *Courier-Mail* 30.10.1990.
[3] The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines a paradox as, "a self contradictory, essentially absurd statement; a person conflicting with preconceived notions of what is reasonable or possible."

> Hard work, piety and free enterprise are the ideals here...oiled where necessary by political rat cunning in the best of all possible causes.[4]

In 1975, Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, frustrated by Bjelke-Petersen's antagonism towards the Federal Labor government, characterized the Queensland Premier as "a Bible-bashing bastard."[5] Ordinary citizens also recognized the paradox. In 1976, a correspondent to the Brisbane *Courier-Mail* concluded that,

> The Premier's threat to sack [Fraser Island environmentalist] John Sinclair from his post as Adult Education Officer reveals yet another un-Christian facet of his character - vindictiveness.[6]

Piety and political rat cunning; bible bashing and bastardry; and a vindictiveness at odds with a faith that historically placed considerable emphasis on charity and compassion: these are the poles of the paradox.

Bjelke-Petersen consistently claimed both personally and for his government what editorial writers termed the "moral high ground."[7] He made no secret of his daily habit of seeking Divine guidance through prayer and

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[4] David Rolls, "What makes farmer Joh fly?" *Australian Penthouse* (February, 1981) 43.
[5] Hugh Lunn, *Joh. The life and political adventures of Johannes Bjelke-Petersen* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1978) 162 -163.
[6] *CM* 22.11.1976.
[7] Following revelations before the Fitzgerald Inquiry the Brisbane *Sunday Mail* editorialized, "What a jape that it [corruption] had all gone on so long under a National Party Government that made such an unctuous claim to the moral high ground." *Sunday Mail* (hereafter *SM*), 22.11.1987.

reading the Bible.[8] His statement of personal religious beliefs is consistent with orthodox Christian beliefs[9] and he made strenuous efforts to attend public worship on Sundays in his local Lutheran church.[10] How could he have permitted - by omission or commission - the prostitution of the political process to the extent alleged and admitted by witnesses to the Fitzgerald Inquiry in 1987 and 1988?[11]

Moreover, how could a person who adhered to the Christian faith with such self-proclaimed piety and zeal find himself so frequently in conflict with the leadership of the major Christian churches in Queensland over matters of public policy during his premiership, to the extent that in 1985 he told the visiting Archbishop of Canterbury to go home[12] and supported remarks by Victorian RSL president Bruce Ruxton that the Nobel Peace Prize winning South African primate, Archbishop Desmond Tutu was "a witchdoctor"?[13]

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[8] Muston 5-6.
[9] "A firm foundation", *New Life*, 24.10.1985.
[10] Kingaroy Lutheran Pastor Ken Schmidt: "It surprises me the enormous efforts he makes to be at worship". *CM* 31.3.1987
[11] For detail on the allegations and admissions as well as general background to the Inquiry see Phil Dickie, *The road to Fitzgerald*, (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1988), and John Harrison, "Nigel Powell: a citizen's arrest", *Journey*, March 1989, 7-10. For specific reportage of the charges laid against Bjelke-Petersen see *CM* 30.11.1990 and 3.11.1990.
[12] *CM* 17.4.1985.
[13] *CM* 13.1.1987.

This study addresses these two questions by starting with an overview of the traditional, orthodox Lutheran doctrine of the relationship between the Christian and the state as this developed from the time of the Protestant Reformation in sixteenth century Germany. Luther was chosen as the starting point because at the outset of this study, it was regarded as conceivable - given that Bjelke-Petersen professed to be a pious and devout Lutheran - that the Bjelke-Petersen paradox could be explained as an expression of the classical Lutheran understanding of the relationship between the Christian and the state, and that Bjelke-Petersen was a modern exemplar of the dualism of the doctrine of the two kingdoms at work. Such a view formed the working hypothesis that undergirded much of the initial research into this subject. But doctrine does not exist in a vacuum. Thus, this overview of classical Lutheran doctrines is followed by an outline of the development of the various Lutheran traditions in Australia, and the place of Lutheranism within the broader context of the religious culture of Queensland.

Within this broader context, we shall also seek to delineate some of the elements which characterize the religious culture of Queensland, in particular pietism in religious practice and congregationalism in ecclesiastical polity. Our introduction to the religious culture of Queensland concludes with an outline of the

major influences on religious life in Queensland during the Bjelke-Petersen premiership, especially the emergence of neo-pietism in the nineteen eighties.

Thus armed with some insight into classical Lutheranism, and having established some of the primary characteristics of the religious culture of Queensland in Section 1, we shall move in Section 2 to examine Bjelke-Petersen's religious and political formation in the South Burnett district of Queensland. This section encompasses his youth and early adulthood; his entry to Parliament; his years on the backbench in both Opposition and Government; his accession to Cabinet and ultimately to the premiership. Particular attention will be paid to the way in which the Lutheran tradition was mediated to Bjelke-Petersen during his formative years, not only by his parents, but also by his religious and political mentors, as they formed part of the religious culture of the South Burnett district. In this section Bjelke-Petersen's affinity with the dominant characteristics of the religious culture prevailing in Queensland becomes clear.

Sections 3 and 4 focus on the years of Bjelke-Petersen's premiership, and upon the outworking in political terms of those elements of the religious culture of Queensland that Bjelke-Petersen had absorbed in the South Burnett. As Bjelke-Petersen's premiership progressed there emerged

from religious sources, and on religious grounds, some resistance to the policies Bjelke-Petersen and his administration were pursuing. This resistance also challenged the prevailing ethos of the religious culture of Queensland, an ethos Bjelke-Petersen epitomized. The path of this resistance - which focused primarily on civil rights and human rights issues - and the response in both religious and political terms that this resistance engendered are the subject of Section 3.

Section 4 outlines the emergence of religious and political counterpoints to the resistance, with the growth in influence of fundamentalist and neo-pentecostal groups. The emergence of such forces is seen as a reassertion of the pietism which had long dominated the religious culture of Queensland, and some interactions between neo-pietists and other religious groups in Queensland are described, as are the neo-pietists' links with Bjelke-Petersen and the National Party he led.

Finally, it will be suggested that during the course of his premiership, as the links between Bjelke-Petersen and the neo-pietists grew stronger and as the apparatus of state became more corrupt, that Bjelke-Petersen began to transcend the traditional pietism which characterized both him and the religious culture of Queensland. Further, that drawing on traditional pietism, and reinforced by the various forms of neo-pietism, Bjelke-

Petersen and his supporters became the vanguard of an emerging new civil religion best described as a `faith in the Sunshine state.´ It is therefore concluded that it is in this movement towards civil religion, rather than in an adherence to a traditional and orthodox Lutheran confessionalism replete with a classical Lutheran understanding of the relationship between the Christian and the state, that a resolution of the Bjelke-Petersen paradox might be found.

II.

Amid the apparent contradictions between Bjelke-Petersen´s beliefs and behaviour, he outwardly conformed to many of the canons of orthodox Christianity. "I am a man who has a faith," he told a journalist from the Australian evangelical monthly *On Being* in 1977:

> Every day I seek God´s blessing. I find that necessary. I also do meditation. And I never miss church on a Sunday, no matter where I am. I have...a trust...in the basis of Bible teaching. I believe it, my word I do.[14]

In gatherings of Christian believers, Bjelke-Petersen was even more articulate about his faith. He told a dinner at the Stafford North Baptist Church Men´s Fellowship in Brisbane in 1985:

> There is no other way but through Jesus Christ as our Saviour through faith in Him. There is nothing difficult about it. . . to seek and follow him through the strength he will give us. Christians ask God to strengthen their

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[14] Muston 5-6

> faith and give them His Spirit, wisdom and understanding. I do that every day and every night. I pray for others. . . for one´s dear ones, for our state, our nation and its people.
>
> God has prepared a way for us through the life, birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Saviour. I´m a great believer in the opening and closing of doors as a Christian. If the way opens up, I feel that one can move forward with confidence, recognizing God´s will and plan. God can and does care for us and does guide us and does help us. Not that we deserve it. . . but because we know we are very poor miserable sinners and need God´s forgiveness every day.[15]

Thus, consistent with Christian orthodoxy, Bjelke-Petersen recognized the centrality of Christ in God´s plan of salvation; had a consciousness of sin and a humility before God; acknowledged the need for Christian believers to seek God´s forgiveness and guidance and had assurance that God has a plan for the life of every Christian believer. At the time some of Bjelke-Petersen´s political opponents may have found the reference `miserable sinners´ surprising, as may have some readers of his memoirs. While some theologians may have found Bjelke-Petersen´s expressions of religious faith individualistic and pietistic, lacking reference to other elements of the Christian tradition such as the Sacraments and to the community of faith within which the Christian believer lives and works, the faith expressed by Bjelke-Petersen nevertheless appears to be one of authentic, albeit restricted, Protestant orthodoxy.

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[15] *New Life* 24.10.1985.

III.

Yet, to what extent have journalists and commentators, historians and political scientists seriously examined Bjelke-Petersen's religious heritage and spiritual formation as sources for understanding both his personality and his policies in government? Both reportage and commentary on how his faith influenced Bjelke-Petersen's personality and the policies of his government has tended to focus only on outward observances. Typical of such reportage is the following account in the Brisbane *Daily Sun* of Bjelke-Petersen at worship in Kingaroy's Bethany Lutheran Church, the morning after the 1983 Queensland state election :

> The early morning sun slanted through the stained glass windows of the little wooden church in Kingaroy, bush flies buzzed lethargically among the congregation, babies wailed, children fidgeted and Johannes Bjelke-Petersen nodded thoughtfully. . . the Premier clasped his hands before him. He was no longer the politician who the day before had decimated his opponents . . . Yesterday he was one of the 120 devout who had gathered.[16]

A front page photograph of a victorious Bjelke-Petersen outside the Bethany Lutheran Church on Sunday after elections became as much a stock photograph for editors as a photograph of the winning horse the day after the Melbourne Cup, or newly created knights on New Year's Day.

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[16] *Daily Sun* (Hereafter *DS*) 24.10.1983.

Bjelke-Petersen has been the subject of two full length biographies. Journalist Hugh Lunn published *Joh. The Life and Political Adventures of Johannes Bjelke-Petersen* in 1968,[17] ten years after Bjelke-Petersen's accession to power. It was written in the aftermath of Bjelke-Petersen's unremitting war against the Whitlam Labor government, during which time he had become a national political figure. Derek Townsend's *Jigsaw*,[18] derided by Lunn as a "fortuitously arranged ...official biography,"[19] was published in 1983 in time for the state election following the coalition split. In style and scope, it is more like a campaign biography in the best traditions of presidential electioneering, and is probably better described as hagiography. Townsend wrote of:

> The ability of Joh to produce an influence that has benefited Queensland because the public has been given faith in the ability of the Leader [author's capitalization] and his colleagues to meet commitments, but also to deliver balanced and wise decisions. ...the name Bjelke-Petersen will remain for ever as a symbol of grit, determination and achievement... Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, Statesman extraordinary.[20]

Both Lunn and Townsend offer a number of anecdotes about Bjelke-Petersen's early life, the family's Danish origins; stories of the hardships suffered by Bjelke-

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[17] Lunn 162-3.
[18] D.Townsend, *Jigsaw. The biography of Johannes Bjelke-Petersen* (Brisbane: Sneyd and Morley, 1983).
[19] Hugh Lunn, *Johannes Bjelke-Petersen: A political biography*, (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1984) 365.
[20] Townsend 361 and 365.

Petersen's parents and grandparents and Bjelke-Petersen himself; and most usefully for analysis of the Bjelke-Petersen personality, anecdotes and incidents illustrative of the relationships between Bjelke-Petersen and his parents and Bjelke-Petersen and his siblings, brother Christian and sister Neta. However, while both books tell about the work Joh Bjelke-Petersen's father Carl as a Lutheran pastor, and that Joh was brought up in a Christian home, and came to own that faith personally, they are bereft of detail about Bjelke-Petersen's spiritual formation and the character of the religious milieu in which his faith was formed. Lunn writes in vague terms about Bjelke-Petersen in his late teens having, "a new, more spiritual confidence which came from his association with the Lutheran Church,"[21] and Lunn's only direct reference to the content, as distinct from the influence, of Bjelke-Petersen's religious beliefs is several sentences taken from a 1975 ABC-TV interview. Lunn quoted Bjelke-Petersen speaking of his early days as a Sunday School teacher at the Edenvale Lutheran Church:

> I just thought of it in terms of telling the people the simple story you can read in the Bible for yourselves, the story of God's love for mankind, for sinful human beings and his plan of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ...We had extreme poverty but I was rich in that my parents gave me a deep understanding of spiritual things by their lives and their influence. They taught me to live in friendship with God.[22]

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[21] Lunn, *Joh* 26.
[22] Lunn, *Joh* 27.

IV.

Like the secular media, the religious media in Australia showed only a limited ability during Bjelke-Petersen's premiership to interpret events for its constituency from a theological perspective, while acknowledging that a plurality of points of view exists on the question of the proper relationship between Christians and the state.[23] For example, in 1983, when Bjelke-Petersen attacked Aboriginal spirituality in an address to the Northern Development conference in Darwin,[24] the *Catholic Leader*, official organ of the Brisbane archdiocese, took Bjelke-Petersen to task with the headline "You're wrong, Sir Joh." The *Leader* then restated the arguments for recognition of the special relationship between Aboriginal spirituality and the land.[25] The issue was raised in the Queensland Parliament by Opposition Leader Warburton, and Bjelke-Petersen responded that:

> ...sacred snakes had nothing to do with eternal life. We [the government] believe in the Christian faith, set out in the Bible, as it relates to this life and the life which is to come.[26]

But neither the *Catholic Leader*, nor any other organ of the religious press, offered any analysis as to why Bjelke-Petersen expressed the views he did.

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[23] For a summary of the extent and influence of the religious media in Australia see John Harrison, "The religious media in Australia," *Australian Journalism Review* 10 (1988) 52-57.
[24] *CM* 17.11.1983.
[25] *Catholic Leader* 12.3.1983
[26] *CM* 20.11.1983.

Some religious publications belonging to neo-pietist religious groups editorialized their support for Bjelke-Petersen in feature articles and news stories. The short-lived independent charismatic newspaper, the *Son Times* ran a front page story about casinos in March 1986. Above an interview with Bjelke-Petersen about the moral dilemmas he faced over the introduction of casinos into Queensland headlined,`"No help from churches"- Joh!,´ the publication commented:

> We are not unsympathetic towards the dilemma he has faced on the matter of the casino. Politics has often been described as `the art of the possible´ and Sir Joh, like others, had to face not only his own convictions, but also the reality of his party´s policy on the subject.[27]

Such an argument failed to recognize that Bjelke-Petersen had defied party policy in the past - for example on the issue of establishing a foreign land ownership register in Queensland. Moreover, Bjelke-Petersen sympathetically received a casino development proposal put by Gold Coast developer, Eddie Kornhauser, and it was only the insistence of then Deputy Premier Llew Edwards that prevented the Kornhauser proposition from succeeding.[28] Like the *Son Times*, the *Logos Journal* preceded an interview with Bjelke-Petersen in 1987 with an editorial endorsement in the following terms:

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[27] *Son Times*, March 1986, p. 1.
[28] *CM* 7.12.1988. Kornhauser´s relationship with R. J. Hinze later led to his being charged with bribery offences.

> In our view Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen epitomizes the traditional values of Christian commitment, family life, strong leadership and personal sacrifice. During an interview with the Queensland Premier recently [we]... stressed that the people of Australia are weary of party politics and demand the return of power to the people... We encouraged Sir Joh and promised we would ask our readers to pray for him as a Christian man.[29]

What was required of the religious press was not that they be critical of Bjelke-Petersen, but that they interpret in theological, rather than political, terms the context within which both they and Bjelke-Petersen were operating. The only media outlet to offer such an interpretation consistently was the religious programs department of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.[30] Another rare exception was a report by the Anglican national weekly, *Church Scene* of an address by Anglican priest and historian John Moses at a celebration of the festival of St Hugh in the Brisbane working class suburb of Inala. Moses drew parallels between the traditional Anglican construction of politics and the German Lutheran tradition. Moses concluded:

> If the church in Queensland supinely accepts that she has no part in the Church/State dialogue, if she is cowed by the bullying of an alien political culture into simply endorsing what the state finds to be politically expedient, then she has betrayed the heritage

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[29] Howard Carter and Ian Sheldon, "The faith of Sir Joh," *Logos Journal* 2.5 (June 1987) 12.
[30] Two examples of this are David Millikan's interview with Bjelke-Petersen on *Compass* 3.7.1988 and Ian Gillman's *Journal of Religion* 11.5.1983 which compared the influence of religion on the political outlook of Bjelke-Petersen and R.J.L Hawke.

> of which St Hugh was such a doughty champion.[31]

V.

We now examine the manner in which some scholarly analyses of Bjelke-Petersen have treated his religion. In his general history of Queensland, *From 1915 to the 1980s*, Ross Fitzgerald is content to dismissively describe Bjelke-Petersen's religious background in terms of a "moral fervour which earned him a reputation as a preacher and a `wowser'".[32] Fitzgerald later quotes Lunn's remark about Bjelke-Petersen's early parliamentary performances, that, "He appears as a fundamental man, blinkered, calvinistic and rural..."[33] and adds his own assessment of Bjelke-Petersen as "a fundamentalist Christian, passionately anti-socialist and a fervent advocate of unfettered development."[34] Fitzgerald then misquotes, without acknowledgement, Margaret Cribb's view that,

> Bjelke-Petersen's particular version of the Protestant work ethic and fundamental (sic) religious belief, `hard work = money = success = salvation' has never altered.[35]

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[31] *Church Scene* 26.12.1986.
[32] Ross Fitzgerald, *From 1915 to the early 1980s* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1984) 226.
[33] Lunn, *Johannes Bjelke-Petersen: A political biography* 45. (Not page 34 as cited in Fitzgerald's endnotes).
[34] Fitzgerald 224.
[35] Fitzgerald 245.

These assessments are inadequate, demonstrating in particular, some confusion about the terms `fundamental´ and `fundamentalist´. From the context, Lunn may well have used the term `fundamental´ intentionally. Fitzgerald, on the other hand, probably intended to use the term `fundamentalist´; a word with an entirely different meaning and history.[36] It is also the word originally used by Cribb in the quotation repeated by Fitzgerald.[37] Moreover, unless the description is intended to be a synomym for terms such as "narrow" and "bigotted", to term Bjelke-Petersen `calvinistic´ is to miss the whole point. Bjelke-Petersen owes very little to John Calvin; but rather more to Martin Luther. Furthermore Bjelke-Petersen, while a strong advocate of hard work, had sufficient understanding of his faith to know that hard work, or even good works, was not the way to salvation. To take such a view would be to deny the very foundation of Lutheran doctrine: that salvation is `by faith alone´- *sola fide*.

One further point. Was Bjelke-Petersen, as Cribb and Fitzgerald suggest, an exemplar of the `Protestant work ethic´? The relationship between ascetic Protestantism and capitalism has been widely debated since Max Weber published in 1904 and 1905 the essays that became *The*

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[36] For that meaning and history see James Barr, *Fundamentalism* (London: SCM, 1977).
[37] M.B.Cribb, "Queensland politics", *Current Affairs Bulletin* 51.1 (1975) 29.

Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism,[38] but Cribb and Fitzgerald apply the label without attempting to define the term. Bjelke-Petersen may typify the Protestant work ethic, in that he advocated hard work and was abstemious in his personal habits, but it needs remembering that Weber held Calvinism, and not Lutheranism, to be the locus of ascetic Protestantism, although he did regard Pietism, along with Methodism and Baptism as forms of ascetic Protestantism.[39]

A similar lack of rigour can be found in a political profile of Bjelke-Petersen by James Walter and Kay Dickie in *The Bjelke-Petersen premiership 1968-83: issues in public policy*. Walter and Dickie state that for Bjelke-Petersen the task of biography, "is largely accomplished." They continue:

> We will not be concerned with pursuing new information...We hope instead to arrive at a better understanding of his Premiership by reorganizing what is already public knowledge.[40]

Unfortunately, the task is largely unaccomplished and new information is required - in particular, information about and analysis of Bjelke-Petersen's spiritual

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[38] Max Weber, *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*, tr., Talcott Parsons, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1930).
[39] C.Johnston,"Ascetic Protestantism and bourgeois ideology," *Politics* XV 1 (May 1980): 47.
[40] James Walter and Kay Dickie, "Johannes Bjelke-Petersen: A political profile," in Alan Patience, ed., *The Bjelke-Petersen premiership 1968-83.Issues in public policy* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1985) 33.

formation, his adherence to Lutheranism, and the political and religious milieu in which he lived - if Walter and Dickie's modest aim of a better understanding of Bjelke-Petersen's premiership is to be achieved. Some of that new information will be found in later chapters of this study.

The influential scholarly commentary the "Political Chronicle" of the *Australian Journal of Politics and History* faithfully recorded clashes between church and state during the Bjelke-Petersen premiership, but it makes only fragmentary reference to Bjelke-Petersen's religious beliefs as an influence on politics. The earliest reference was to liquor reform in late 1968 which, the Chronicle recorded, was opposed by the Premier,"himself a teetotaler on religious grounds."[41] The other reference of significance was made in 1973, during the Whitlam years when Margaret Cribb wrote that Bjelke-Petersen's opposition to the proposals and policies of the Federal Labor Government,

> ... no doubt stems in part from his fundamentalist beliefs and principles, yet his native political shrewdness should not be discounted as contributing factors.[42]

Again, explanation of what is meant by `fundamentalist', the nature of Bjelke-Petersen's fundamentalist

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[41] Political Chronicle, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 15.1 (April 1969): 96.
[42] Political Chronicle, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 19.2 (Aug 1973): 268.

principles, and the extent of their influence when balanced against Bjelke-Petersen's `native political shrewdness' remains tantalizingly unstated. The designation of Bjelke-Petersen's religious beliefs as `fundamentalist' is also made in two of Cribb's major pieces on Queensland politics in the Bjelke-Petersen years. In 1975 Cribb made the comment echoed above by Ross Fitzgerald. In 1981, Cribb wrote of Bjelke-Petersen:

> Perhaps to Queenslanders his appeal...lies in his certainty of his own rectitude (a not unfamiliar trait in those with strong fundamentalist religious beliefs)...[43]

Again, no exposition of either fundamentalism, Bjelke-Petersen's religious beliefs, or of how these might be fundamentalist, is forthcoming. The question as to whether Bjelke-Petersen is most accurately described as a fundamentalist is discussed in Chapter 20.

In a subsequent analysis Cribb is on stronger ground when writing of `rural fundamentalism', a rural ultra-conservatism at the core of Queensland society and politics; a set of values which holds that,

> all that is worthy and useful in morality, religion, societal values and the economy stems from the land and its usage...that old and traditional beliefs and values are more worthy than others, that they should be accorded the greatest respect and therefore that questioning or dissenting from them is, by implication, wrong.[44]

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[43] M.B.Cribb, "Queensland politics," *Current Affairs Bulletin* 58.5 (1981) 30.
[44] M.B.Cribb, "The political impact of the Games," *The 1982 Commonwealth Games: A retrospect* (St Lucia:

While noting that "this value system did not come to Queensland in the baggage train of the present Premier," Cribb concluded," ...he is the personification of most of its values."[45] Cribb is not writing here about religious fundamentalism, but rather defining a primary characteristic of Queensland's political culture.

Cribb's analysis was quoted approvingly and at length, by other Queensland political scientists: Scott, Coaldrake, Head and Reynolds.[46] They have reiterated Cribb's view of Bjelke-Petersen as the personification of `rural fundamentalism', particularly with reference to his intervention in educational policy making at the behest of "religious fundamentalist groups"[47] and commented on the influence of the Premier's personality:

> It is the personal authority of the Premier which represents a basic force in Queensland politics...His remarkable length of term in office has been sustained rather than threatened by outrageous remarks, commitment to charlatans and ruthless suppression of dissent. His direct involvement in major questions of political strategy, economic policy-making and relationships with other levels of government means that he bestrides the Queensland political scene like a colossus, and shapes the behaviour and aspirations of all those around him.[48]

Australian Studies Centre, University of Queensland, 1984) 50-51.
[45] Cribb, "Games" 50-51.
[46] Roger Scott, et. al., "Queensland" in Brian Galligan, *Australian state politics* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1986) 52.
[47] Scott 53.
[48] Scott 53-54.

Both Reynolds[48] and Boyce identify the importance of the Bjelke-Petersen persona in a manner similar to the above. Writing in the mid nineteen eighties, Boyce raised the question as to whether some of the characteristics of the Queensland political culture, such as, "widespread acceptance of conservative values and populist leadership" or as he describes them,"the idiosyncrasies of political behaviour...actual and visible,"[50] will survive the retirement of Bjelke-Petersen to Bethany. He concluded that because Bjelke-Petersen, "epitomizes or reflects many of the central values nurtured in Queensland's political sub-culture,"[51] that this is likely.

'Populist leadership' is one the 'idiosyncrasies of political behaviour in Queensland,'according to Boyce. Other political scientists, like Alan Patience dispute the populist tag, saying;

> The overweening determination of the Bjelke-Petersen governments to promote economic growth and development in Queensland shows them to be far less shy and suspicious of big business, technology, expertise and the metropolis than most self-respecting populists would be.[52]

Patience then argues that, "Queensland populism remains an essentially twentieth century version of old

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[48] Paul Reynolds, "Queensland's autocracy: the fatal flaw for Labor," *Labor Forum* 1.4 (June 1979): 10.
[50] M.B.Cribb and P.J.Boyce, *Queensland politics: 1977 and beyond,* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1980) 5-6.
[51] Cribb and Boyce 5-6.
[52] Patience 279.

Australian larrikinism,"[53] and concludes that the philosophical framework of the Bjelke-Petersen governments has been,

> ... shaped in a culture which has emerged out of a nineteenth century larrikinism into an impatient and often philistine glorification for material success and economic development...buttressed by a rigid and narrow sense of moral rectitude and a determinedly authoritarian mode of putting them into practice.[54]

Even though a paradox worthy of inclusion at the beginning of this chapter, it is difficult to sustain any view of Bjelke-Petersen as a larrikin-wowser. As we find in later chapters there are other explanations for what appears to be larrikinism. For Patience's `old Australian larrikinism,' whether its roots lie in convict Australia, or are related to the emergence of an urban working class in the eighteen nineties, is an unfamiliar phenomenon in Queensland - a culture dominated by ruralism. On the other hand, irrespective of the contradiction, the notion of Bjelke-Petersen as a populist cannot be dismissed so easily. Religion was an important element in North American agrarian populism. Both William Aberhart in Canada, and William Jennings Bryan in the United States held fundamentalist religious beliefs. So is there a significant relationship between agrarian populism and fundamentalism? The manner in which Bjelke-Petersen's religious beliefs related to what is here described as

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[53] Patience 280.
[54] Patience 281.

his populist approach to politics are discussed in detail in Chapter 19.

In summary, among political scientists Bjelke-Petersen's personality, and among some, his religious beliefs, are credited with an impact on public policy. There is also a recognition that the religious dimensions of the culture from which he comes are both historically influential and politically relevant. Bjelke-Petersen has been labelled a 'fundamentalist', ` wowser', `calvinistic' and an exemplar of the Protestant work ethic, but little attempt has been made to explore the specific nature of Bjelke-Petersen's beliefs and the process of their formation.

Political scientists have failed also to recognize the role played by the churches as a pressure group in the development of public policy in Queensland. In his standard text *The Government of Queensland*, Colin Hughes dismisses the role of the churches as a pressure group in one paragraph.[55] Similarly, the role of the churches in the formulation of public policy in the areas such as education, social welfare, civil liberties and more particularly, Aboriginal affairs, has been ignored by contributors to *The Bjelke-Petersen premiership*.[56]

Therefore, given the apparent failure of both journalists and political scientists to fully address the influence

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[55] Colin Hughes, *The government of Queensland* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1980) 286.
[56] See Patience chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9.

of religion on the career and policies of Bjelke-Petersen, this study offers new insights first, into the Bjelke-Petersen premiership; secondly into the inter-relationship between religion and politics in Queensland during that premiership; and thirdly into the character of the religious culture of Queensland. It is to that culture, and the manner in which it has been treated historically that we now examine.

VI.

The land, the vast distances across its surface, and the desire of European settlers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to develop it and the resources beneath it, are the key to understanding the political culture of Queensland, and much of the religious culture as well.[57] Argument about the distinctiveness, even

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[57] The concept of `political culture´, and its value in describing, and even predicting, political behaviour has been widely debated by political scientists since the term was first used in the 1960s.(See H.V.Emy, "The roots of Australian politics; a critique of a culture," *Politics* 7.1 (1972): 12-30. One of the first scholars to use the term widely, Stanley Verba defined the political culture of a society as,"the system of empirical beliefs and expressive symbols, and values which defines the situation in which political action takes place. It provides the subjective orientation to politics." L.W.Pye & S.Verba, *Political culture and political development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965) 513. `Political culture´ still remains a widely used term and is a sufficiently useful concept to be transposed from political science to *Religionschwissenschaft* thus giving us a definition of religious culture as:
"the system of empirical beliefs and expressive symbols and values which defines the situation in which religious faith is practiced, providing the subjective orientation to religion[s]".

uniqueness, of Queensland's political culture in comparison with other states and territories of the Australian Commonwealth has generated considerable discussion among journalists,[58] historians,[59] political scientists,[60] and even literary figures.[61] Without digressing into that debate, Queensland clearly has a distinctive political culture.

Almost every political scientist and historian writing about the political culture of Queensland refers to the significance of economic development and material progress: Colin Hughes, Denis Murphy, Margaret Cribb and Alan Patience.[62] Their views are quoted widely by other historians and political scientists: Ross Fitzgerald, Roger Scott, Peter Boyce, Paul Reynolds *et. al.*[63] Indeed so extensive is the acceptance of this notion, that it gives some credence to Patrick O'Farrell's

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[58] Peter Charlton, *State of mind. Why Queensland is different* (Sydney: Methuen Haynes, 1983).
[59] H.McQueen, "Queensland: A state of mind," *Meanjin* 38.1 (1979): 41-51 and Denis Murphy, "Queensland's image and Australian nationalism," *Australian Quarterly*, 50.2 (1978): 77-92.
[60] Scott 51 and J.W.Berry, "The stereotypes of the Australian states," *Australian Journal of Psychology* 21.3 (1969): 227-233.
[61] Thea Astley, "Being a Queenslander: a form of literary and geographical conceit," *Southerly* 36 (1976): 252-264.
[62] Hughes 5; Denis Murphy, "Political Chronicle", *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 17.1 (1971): 120; Cribb, "Queensland politics," (1981): 30; Patience 279.
[63] Fitzgerald, *From 1915* 204, 207; Scott 51-52; Cribb and Boyce 5.

concern that the writing of Australian history contains a bias towards a materialist perspective.[64]

The influence of religion on the political culture is rarely mentioned. Therefore, when it is mentioned, as in Patricia Smith's description of the political culture of Queensland in *The Bjelke-Petersen premiership*, it is unfortunate that the reference is anachronistic:

> ...some of the early settlers did have firm ideas about good and evil, and religion played a significant part in their lives. To men eager to reap the material benefits of life in a new society it was convenient to foster a fundamentalist Christianity.[65]

Fundamentalism, of course, did not exist as a religious movement at this time. Why the religious factor has been ignored or misunderstood in descriptions of Queensland's political culture is not clear, but it may be because no cogent or coherent interpretation of the history of religious life in Queensland in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been written yet.

There are a number of historical studies of church and state,[66] and of the religious aspect of life, in

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[64] Patrick O'Farrell, "Writing the general history of Australian religion," *Journal of Religious History* 9.1 (1976): 71.
[65] Patricia Smith, "Queensland's political culture," in Patience 21.
[66] J.T.R.Border, *Church and state in Australia 1788-1872: a constitutional study of the Church of England in Australia* (London: SPCK, 1962); J.S.Gregory, *Church and state: changing government policies towards religion in Australia with particular reference to Victoria since separation* (Melbourne: Cassell, 1973) and R.G.Ely, *Unto*

Australia,[67] especially as it impinges on the political development of several of the colonies.[68] There are also general works on the historical impact of religion[69] or religious groups such as Catholics,[70] as well as sociological studies of religion, covering more recent times.[71] Yet when one examines the scholarship undertaken on the relationship between the religious and the political aspects of life, particularly in Queensland, there appears to be a significant gap. Historians of Queensland political personalities and the political process have tended to ignore the possible public policy impacts of the personal religious values of their subjects.[72] The discussion has been more in terms

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God and unto Caesar. Religious issues in the emerging Commonwealth (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1976).

[67] John Barrett, *That better country. The religious aspect of life in Eastern Australia 1835-1850* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1966); Michael Roe, *The quest for authority in eastern Australia 1835-1851,* (Parkville: Melbourne University Press, 1965) and T.L.Suttor, *Hierarchy and democracy in Australia 1788-1870: the formation of Australian Catholicism* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1965).

[68] Douglas Pike, *Paradise of dissent. South Australia 1829-1857* (London: Longmans, 1957); J.D.Bollen, *Protestantism and social reform in New South Wales 1890-1910* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1972), and Richard Broome, *Treasure in earthen vessels. Protestant Christianity in New South Wales society 1900-1914* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1980).

[69] J.D.Bollen, *Religion in Australian society. An historian's view,* Leigh College Lectures 1973, (Sydney: Leigh College, 1973).

[70] Patrick O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and community in Australia,* rev. edn., (Kensington: UNSW Press, 1985).

[71] J.J.Mol, *Religion in Australia* (Melbourne: Nelson, 1971) and J.J.Mol, *The faith of Australians* (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1985).

[72] D.J.Murphy & R.B.Joyce, eds., *Queensland political portraits 1859-1952* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1978); R.B.Joyce, *Samuel Walker Griffith* (St

of how the denominational affiliation of the subject influenced the development of their political career, rather than the continuing impact of the subject's religious attitudes and values on public policy. This tendency is even more marked in unpublished theses on Queensland political figures.[73]

This study is attempting to break new ground in developing a coherent and unified understanding of the characteristics of the religious culture of Queensland since Separation. Recently published general histories of Queensland give almost no account of the development of religious values and institutions in Queensland.[74] There are also studies, such as those of Parker,[75] which narrate the development of particular theological

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Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1984); D.J.Murphy, *T J Ryan. A political biography* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1975).

[73] See for example D.K.Dignan,"Sir Thomas McIllwraith: his public career and political thought," unpublished B.A. (Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1951; K.J.Mason, "The Honorable John Douglas C.M.G." unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1969; D.G.Greenwood, "Edward Granville Theodore: politician, tactician, and financial administrator," unpublished B.A. (Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1966, and R.H.Gill, "The career and legend of Thomas Joseph Byrnes (1860-1898)," unpublished B.A. (Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1975.

[74] Ross Fitzgerald, *From the Dreaming to 1915* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1982) and *From 1915 to the early 1980s. A history of Queensland* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1984); W. R. Johnston, *The call of the land* (Milton: Jacaranda, 1982) and W.R.Johnston, *A documentary history of Queensland* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1988.

[75] D.Parker, "Fundamentalism and conservative protestantism in Australia 1920-80," 2 vols, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Queensland, 1982.

ideas and movements in Australia. Such studies tend to be limited by their failure to examine the broader social and political impacts of such movements and ideas. Again, this study has sought to breach such a cloistered approach by its direct focus on the political impact of religious ideas and practices.

The histories that have been written are mainly commemorative denominational histories published over forty years ago, such as Dingle's centenary history of Methodism, *Annals of achievement*, Bardon's *The centenary history of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland*, and Theile's *One hundred years of the Lutheran Church in Queensland*.[76] More recently, Haigh and White have published material on the Churches of Christ and the Baptist Church in Queensland respectively.[77] Apart from the unpublished works of Rayner on the Church of England, Lockley on Congregationalism, and Laver on the Quakers[78], scholarly attention has focused on biography

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[76] R.S.C.Dingle, ed., *Annals of achievement: A review of Queensland Methodism 1847-1947* (Brisbane: Queensland Book Depot, 1947); Richard Bardon, *The centenary history of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland* (Brisbane: Presbyterian Church of Queensland, Brisbane, 1949); F.O.Theile, *One hundred years of the Lutheran Church in Queensland* (Brisbane: Watson & Ferguson, 1938).
[77] George Haigh, comp., *Churches of Christ in Queensland: 100 years venturing in faith* (Brisbane: Historical Committee of Conference of Churches of Christ in Queensland, 1983) and J.E.White, *Fellowship of Service: A history of the Baptist Churches in Queensland 1877-1977* (Brisbane: Baptist Union of Queensland, 1977).
[78] K.Rayner, "The history of the Church of England in Queensland," unpublished PhD thesis, University of Queensland, 1962; G.L.Lockley, "The foundation, development and influence of Congregationalism in

and on selected aspects of religious life, particularly education and social questions. Boland's biography of Catholic Archbishop James Duhig[79] is the best of the episcopal biographies. It is supported by McLay's biography of Brisbane's first Catholic bishop James Quinn, Robin's work on Anglican Bishop Matthew Hale (the second bishop of Brisbane from 1875-1885), Richards' study of William Tuffnell, the first Anglican bishop of Brisbane (1859-1874)[80] and most recently Byrne's work on Robert Dunne, (Catholic Archbishop of Brisbane 1882-1917).[81] Dunne until now has been a shadow between those two pillars of Queensland Catholicism, Quinn and Duhig, and Byrne's work is of significant value in discerning the character of the religious culture in nineteenth century Queensland.

John Dunmore Lang and the pioneering Lutheran missionary, Pastor J.G.Haussmann, have also been subjected to

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Australia, with emphasis on the nineteenth century," unpublished PhD thesis University of Queensland, 1968 and Brian Laver, "The Society of Friends in Queensland 1861-1960s," unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1967.

[79] T.P.Boland, *James Duhig* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1986).

[80] Y.M.McLay,"James Quinn, first Catholic bishop of Brisbane," unpublished PhD thesis, University of Queensland, 1975; A.de Q.Robin, *Matthew Blagdon Hale. A life of an Australian pioneer bishop* (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1976); Harold Richards, "Brisbane's first bishop, the Right Reverend Edward Wyndham Tuffnell MA DD," *Queensland Heritage* 3 (1976): 17-25.

[81] Neil Byrne, "Robert Dunne 1830-1917 Archbishop of Brisbane: a biography," unpublished PhD thesis, University of Queensland, 1989.

biographical treatment.[82] Rayner, Gilley and Buch have studied the churches' attitudes on social and political questions,[83] while Hunt, Gwane, Connole, McLay, and Lawry have all examined aspects of the churches' role in education in Queensland.[84] Descriptions of aspects of religious life in Queensland towards the end of the nineteenth century can be found in the chapter on religion in Ronald Lawson's *Brisbane in the 1890s* and in the chapter on religion in Paul Crook's thesis on Brisbane in the 1880s.[85] J.D.Bollen, in his Leigh College lectures in 1973, Ian Breward in his Melbourne

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[82] D.W.A.Baker, *Days of wrath. A life of John Dunmore Lang* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1985) and J.Nolan, "Pastor J.G.Haussmann 1838-1901: A Queensland pioneer," unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1964.

[83] K.Rayner, "Attitudes and influences of the churches in Queensland on matters of social and political importance 1859-1914," unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1951; S.W.Gilley, "Catholic social and political attitudes in Queensland 1870-1900," unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1967 and Neville Buch, "Protestant Churches and their attitude to public issues in Queensland 1919-1939," unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1987.

[84] J.Hunt, "Church and state in education in Queensland," unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland 1959; P.C.Gwane, "State aid to religion and primary education in Queensland, 1860," *Journal of Religious History* 9.1 (1976): 50-64; P.F.Connole, "The Christian Brothers in secondary education in Queensland 1875-1911," unpublished M.A.(Qual.) thesis, University of Queensland, 1963; Y.M.McLay, "A critical appreciation of the educational systems of the Sisters of Mercy, All Hallows Congregation," unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Queensland, 1963, and J.R.Lawry, "Bishop Tuffnell and Queensland education," *Melbourne Studies in Education* (1966): 181-203.

[85] Lawson, and D.P.Crook, "Aspects of Brisbane society in the 1880s," unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1958.

College of Divinity Bicentennial Lectures in 1988, and Ian Gillman in the introduction to *Many faiths, one nation*[86] have all contributed significantly to our understanding of the religious culture of Australia, but references to regional differences in religious culture are few.

Queensland's religious culture, like its political culture, does have its own distinctive character, albeit one that has received little attention from historians and scholars of religion, in the manner in which for example Douglas Pike's *Paradise of dissent* tells the story of South Australia.[87] Thus our knowledge of the religious culture of Queensland is rather fragmentary. In the following chapters, an attempt will be made to describe in broad terms some of the predominant characteristics of the religious culture of Queensland: pietism as a major expression of religious belief; fundamentalism and its relationship to pietism and revivalism; sectarianism; congregationalism as the dominant form of ecclesiastical polity, and the ethos of 'development' as it was understood and expressed in theological and ecclesiological terms. We begin, however, with Lutheranism: in sixteenth century Germany and

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[86] J.D.Bollen, *Religion*; Ian Breward, *Australia "The most godless place under heaven"?* (Melbourne: Beacon Hill, 1988); Ian Gillman, ed., *Many faiths, one nation* (Sydney: Collins, 1988).
[87] Douglas Pike, *Paradise of dissent. South Australia 1829-1857* (London: Longmans, 1957).

nineteenth century Queensland. Our purpose in beginning at this point is to lay the groundwork for a later judgment as to whether Bjelke-Petersen's conception of the relationship between church and state derived from classical Lutheranism, or was more influenced by the less confessionalistic pietism of the religious culture of Queensland, of which his Scandinavian Lutheranism was but part.

CHAPTER 2.

AGAINST THE ROBBING, MURDERING HORDES

It must be admitted the Government have a responsibility to protect the people against themselves.

Joh Bjelke-Petersen 1954.[1]

I.

The founder of Lutheranism, the sixteenth century religious reformer Martin Luther, wrote a number tracts expressing his views on the proper relationship between Christians and secular authority. The more significant of these were *A sincere admonition by Martin Luther to all Christians to guard against insurrection and rebellion,* (1522), *Temporal authority: to what extent it should be obeyed,* (1523), and subsequently a more extreme polemic *Against the robbing and murdering hordes of peasants* (1525), in which he described the peasants as mad dogs! Many of Luther's friends and supporters were appalled by the ferocity of this tract and in response to what he termed "complaints and questions" about it, Luther issued a defence of his views in *An Open letter on the harsh book against the peasants* in 1525.

These four publications were written against a rising tide of peasant rebellion in Germany which culminated in

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[1] *Queensland Parliamentary Debates* (hereafter *QPD*) 210 (30.11.1954): 1724.

the Peasants' War in 1524-26, in which the peasants claimed to have applied Reformation doctrines in their struggle for justice against the ruling princes. The rebellions were put down quickly by the German princes, but their impact has lasted for centuries because the Peasants' War was the social context in which key Lutheran teachings about the relationship between Christians and the secular authorities were formulated.

In *Against the robbing murdering hordes* Luther argues, on the basis of the medieval social contract, that all have sworn to be:

> true and faithful, submissive and obedient, to their rulers, as Christ commands when he says, "Render under to Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (Luke 20:25). And Romans 13 [:1] says, "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities."[2]

It is significant that Luther does not argue from first principles, from the Scriptures, but rather from the existing social contract, the social context in which he was living, and that he supported the existing social contract with biblical prooftexts.[3]

The second point Luther makes is that the peasants are unjustified in claiming their revolt has divine sanction.

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[2] Martin Luther, "Against the robbing and murdering hordes of peasants," in H.T.Lehmann & J.Pelikan, eds., *Luther's works*, 55 vols., (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1957-72) 46:50. (Hereafter cited as *Luther's works*.)

[3] So even the great Reformer was not above a little contextual theology! For the criticism of contemporary liberation theology - is exactly the same; that it reads the Scriptures in the light of the social context.

The peasants had issued a declaration arguing the consistency of their actions with the principles of the Reformation. These actions, it might be added, included the pillaging of monasteries. Luther castigated the peasants for calling themselves "Christian brethren" asserting that in this claim, "they have become the worst blasphemers of God and slanderers of his holy name."[4]

Several points about the subsequent debate over Luther's teaching need to be made. The first arises from the proposition that Luther allowed the social context rather than the Scriptures be the key determinant of his doctrine. Many scholars have pointed out that the Lutheran Reformation in Germany could not have happened without the support of the German princes, and thus Luther was bound to support the princes in any political conflict, be it with Rome or the peasantry.

Secondly, despite the fact that like Luther, Wycliffe, Zwingli and Calvin refused to sanction violence in the overthrow of tyranny, some scholars have argued that Luther's political doctrines have led to the dominant Lutheran tradition being one of quiescence towards the state. According to Ernst Troeltsch who began the debate, Luther posited:

> an extremely conservative, authoritarian understanding of the natural law. . . Here flowers the divine right of authority, the high respect which is due the officials and the

[4] *Luther's works* 46:50.

> police, and the short sighted views of the common herd.[5]

Troeltsch and subsequent commentators have suggested that Luther's "submissive acceptance of the social status quo" contributed to "the ease with which Lutheranism had always succumbed to the reigning political powers," and that Luther's "authoritarian patriarchal conservatism contributed. . . to the rise of the political and military absolutism of Bismark's Prussia-Germany", and indeed, that even Hitler's ideological ancestry can be traced to Luther.[6] This view has been rejected by the upholders of traditional Lutheran scholarship, but the debate continues.

However, there is a second legitimate thread which has been extracted from Luther's teaching on temporal authority. It has become known in the twentieth century as the doctrine of resistance. It is drawn from the affirmation Luther makes in *Murdering hordes,* that if the state causes the believer to sin, then God rather than the state must be obeyed. He cites the apostles before

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[5] E.Troeltsch, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 4 vols., (Tubingen, 1912-25) 4:140, quoted in K. Penzel, "Ernst Troeltsch on Luther", in Jaroslav Pelikan, *Interpreters of Luther* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968) 296.
[6] Penzel 296-297. This proposition has been the subject of some intense scholarly debate. Traditional Lutheran scholarship, as represented by Karl Holl (1866-1926), Paul Althaus (1888-1966) Heinrich Bornkamm and others who regard themselves as guardians of Luther's canon, have defended Luther against Troeltsch and his followers. Cf P.Althaus, *The ethics of Martin Luther*, tr. R.C.Schultz, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972) 29-30 and 62.

the Council in Acts 5: 29, "We must obey God rather than men".[7] It was from this thread that the Confessing Christians, that minority of Christians in Germany who opposed National Socialism, wove the famous Barmen Declaration in 1934, and their subsequent resistance to Nazi tyranny.[8]

II.

The core of Lutheran teaching on the relationship between the Christian and the state is best described as the 'doctrine of two kingdoms'. In *Temporal Authority*, Luther sums up the differences between the two governments this way:

> Both must be permitted to remain; the one to produce righteousness, the other to bring about external peace and prevent evil deeds. Neither one is sufficient in the world without the other. No one can became righteous in the sight of God by means of the temporal government, without Christ's spiritual government. Christ's government does not extend over all men; rather, Christians are always a minority in the midst of non-Christians. Now where temporal

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[7] "Temporal authority," *Luthers Works* 45:125.

[8] For some exposition of the Lutheran doctrine of resistance see W.J.D.Cargill Thompson, "Luther and the right of resistance to the Emperor," in D.Baker, *Church society & politics*, Studies in Church History 12, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975) 159-202. For background on the Barmen Declaration and the Confessing Church see for example, H.G.Locke, *The church confronts the Nazis. Barmen then and now*, Toronto Studies in Theology 16, (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1984) and three articles published to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Barmen Declaration: Ulrich Duchrow, "1984 in the light of article III of the Barmen Declaration. Becoming a confessing church," *International Review of Missions*, LXXIII 292 (October 1984) 427-439; Martin Lehmann-Habeck, "What we have seen and heard: confession and resistance today," *International Review of Missions*, LXXIII 292 (October 1984) 397-404.

> government or law alone prevails, there sheer hypocrisy is inevitable, even though the commandments be God's very own. . . On the other hand, where spiritual government alone prevails over land and people, there wickedness is given free rein and the door is open for all manner of rascality for the world as a whole cannot receive or comprehend it.[8]

Luther argues that in `the kingdom of the world', secular government, along with the estate of marriage and the institution of private property is God-ordained and established for the good order of society.

The two kingdoms doctrine contains a paradox. "God's kingdom is a kingdom of grace and mercy, not of wrath and punishment," writes Luther in the *Open letter*:

> In it there is only forgiveness, consideration for one another, love, service, the doing of good, peace, joy, etc. But the kingdom of the world is a kingdom of wrath and severity. In it there is only punishment, repression, judgment, and condemnation to restrain the wicked and protect the good.For this reason it has the sword, and Scripture calls a prince or lord "God's wrath," or "God's rod".[10]

The paradox is that the Christian, acting as an individual can offer forgiveness to others for wrongdoing; but the Christian acting in his capacity as a ruler must exercise his primary function to maintain order, and must therefore, in Luther's terms, exact retribution for wrongdoing, for an action he would, in his capacity as a Christian individual, forgive. Luther

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[8] "Temporal authority," *Luther's works* 45: 92.
[10] "Open letter," *Luther's works* 46: 69-70.

is aware of this paradox, and according to the Lutheran theologian Paul Althaus:

> expressed the fact that the Christian man lives in two areas in various ways. Sometimes he describes `the two persons or two types of office that are combined in one man´ by distinguishing the `Christian´ and the `secular person´... [11]

Essentially, Luther distinguishes between the `private person´ and the `public person´. A corollary of this principle is that the church has no place in the domain of government. The church´s role is restricted to the realm of individual conscience. Luther wrote:

> Let whoever is supposed to rule or wants to rule be the ruler; I want to instruct and console consciences and advise them as much as I can."[12]

On this count, Luther was especially critical of the papacy for, in his view, confusing the spiritual and the temporal. "The Roman papacy," writes Althaus interpreting Luther,

> has been especially guilty of mixing the two governments... Through canon law the papacy has sought to gain control of secular law and make decisions on secular matters...such as marriage.[13] ...But it is not the function of the church´s ministry to make laws...the ministry is concerned with secular matters insofar as they `touch upon consciences´.[14]

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[11] Althaus 69.
[12] "On marriage matters," (1530) *Luther´s works* 46: 267.
[13] Cf. *Luther´s works* 46: 266.
[14] *Luther´s works* 46: 265.

Likewise, the peasants, "were making social demands in the name of the gospel and thus confusing the two kingdoms."[15]

III.

Even more far reaching in its implications, is Luther's assertion that, as Althaus interprets him:

> Those who govern sit in God's place. Therefore disobedience and rebellion are disobedience and rebellion against God himself. When governments punish, God's own wrath is at work...even though officials are often `knave and rascals' who misuse their office, act arbitrarily, and perpetuate injustice.[16]

The contradictions created by this view are obvious. First, when a (Lutheran) Christian prince is in government, i.e. sitting in God's place, the temptation to believe all actions of government are the will of God, must be considerable. However, it is possible to have Christians in government, `sitting in God's place', believing their actions under divine mandate to be the will of God, but who also misuse their office and perpetuate injustice.

Luther's fear of chaos and civil disorder overides any consciousness of the contradiction. Tyranny is preferable to disorder. His fear is ironic in a man whose words and deeds created some of the greatest chaos in Christendom

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[15] Althaus 61. Cf."Admonition to peace. A reply to the twelve articles of the peasants in Swabia," (1525) *Luther's works* 46:39.
[16] *Luther's works* 46:113-114.

for nearly a millennium. On the other hand as the passage below indicates, his fear comes from personal experience:

> If anyone attempted to rule the world by the gospel...on the plea that all are Christian...He would be loosing the ropes and chains of the savage wild beasts and letting them bite and mangle everyone, meanwhile insisting that they were harmless, tame and gentle creatures; but I would have the proof in my wounds.[17]

Government is essentially an extension of the family, and thus according to Luther, its authority is to be exercised in a patriarchal fashion. The authority exercised by government is inherently based on the authority exercised by the father in the family.[18] Again, this is a view which arises out of the political culture in which Luther lived, the principalities of Reformation Germany. By contemporary standards, it is a view which is not only sexist, but anti-democratic, in that it leaves open the possibility that rulers can ignore the wishes of the people if they, the rulers, perceive those wishes not to be in the best interests of the people.

In summary, Luther posits that there is a dualism between the secular world and the Kingdom of God, although God is sovereign over both domains. Further that civil government - the model for which is patriarchy - is ordained by God as necessary for the maintenance of

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[17] "Temporal authority," *Luther's works* 45:91.
[18] Althaus 115. Cf. Luther's "Commentary on Psalm 82," *Luther's works* 13:58.

public order; that rebellion or dissent against the state is an act of rebellion against God; that disobedience against the state is only sanctioned when the choice is between obeying God or the state; and finally that the role of the church and the clergy in relation to the secular sphere of life is restricted to those areas affecting individual conscience. This individualization of conscience was reinforced by Pietism in the eighteenth century. The central paradox is that though both spheres are God ordained, Christians in authority in the secular sphere may put aside their personal spiritual values - including the New Testament imperative to become Christ-like in their behaviour - in order to give effect to God's demand for order and retributive justice in the world, thus creating a distinction between the actions of the Christian as a private person and a public person.

This, without any reference to Joh Bjelke-Petersen, is the theological framework and the assumptions which could be legitimately held by a devout Lutheran holding an office of state. In the specific case of Joh Bjelke-Petersen how was this framework transmitted and mediated? In particular, what were the influences of family, church and community on the formation of Joh Bjelke-Petersen's religious and political values? It is to the Lutheran tradition in Australia that we now turn.

IV.

It was the redefinition of the relationship between church and state in early nineteenth century Germany that motivated the first wave of German emigration to Australia. The decision of the Prussian King Fredrick William III in 1817 to amalgamate the Lutheran and Reformed churches within his jurisdiction, coupled with the development of biblical criticism - perceived as a threat to Lutheran orthodoxy - caused the emergence of a movement within Germany known as the `Altlutherner´ or Old Lutherans. Seeking the freedom to practise their religion free from state control and to maintain their doctrinal purity, some migrated to the United States where they formed what was to become the conservative Missouri Lutheran Synod. One group migrated to South Australia, `the paradise of dissent´. So the first Lutheran settlers came to Australia in resistance to Fredrick William´s attempt to influence the practice of their faith.

Not all Lutherans emigrating to Australia maintained the strict confessionalism of the Altlutherner. One Lutheran historian, Hebart suggests there were `hyper-Lutherans´ `genuine Lutherans´ and `quasi-Lutherans´. Lutheran settlers in Queensland and Victoria, he viewed as `quasi-Lutherans´, coming from Union churches, i.e. those who accommodated Fredrick William´s amalgamation of Lutheran

and Reformed churches. They did not have,"a genuinely Lutheran beginning, and only gradually became soundly Lutheran," according to Hebart.[18]

In Queensland, the state with the second largest Lutheran population after South Australia, Lutherans constituted some 6% to 7% of the population in the latter part of the nineteenth century. They were first recorded as a separate denomination on the census in 1868 and in that year made up 6.34 % of the population. Table 1 charts their changing fortunes since then.

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGE OF QUEENSLAND POPULATION CLAIMING LUTHERAN AFFILIATION 1868-1986.

1868: 6.34%	1901: 5.6%	1961: 2.3%
1871: 7.15%	1911: 4.1%	1966: 2.4%
1876: 7.03%	1921: 2.36%	1971: 2.5%
1881: 7.9%	1933: 1.9%	1976: 2.3%
1886: 6.6%	1947: 1.93%	1981: 1.68%
1891: 5.94%	1954: 2.17%	1986: 1.7%

[18] Th. Hebart, *The United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia (UELCA) Its history, activities and characteristics 1838-1938* (North Adelaide: Lutheran Book Depot, 1938) 17.

SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS. CENSUS RETURNS.

For most of nineteenth century Queensland had more Lutherans than Methodists. The reason was large scale European migration to Queensland in the eighteen sixties and eighteen seventies,[20] and among such migrants from Denmark were Bjelke-Petersen's maternal grandparents. Unlike the German Lutherans who came to South Australia to escape changes to the relationship between the church and state in Prussia, the motives of Lutheran settlers in Queensland were mainly economic.[21] In consequence, the strict confessional Lutheranism that characterized South Australia was not as strong, and Pietism was a more vital influence. Nor, as occurred in South Australia, did communities immigrate en masse,[22] with the result that Queensland settlers had a greater sense of individualism.

Most immigrants into Queensland settled in rural areas because they were in receipt of land grants, as part of the colonial government's policy of land settlement, and most settled in the rural areas to the south and west of

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[20] See C.Erdmann, "Rural settlements founded by German Immigrants in South Australia and Queensland during the 19th Century," in M.Jurgensen and A.Corkhill, eds., *The German presence in Queensland* (St Lucia: Department of German, University of Queensland, 1988) 118-121 for an account of this migration into Queensland.
[21] P.W.Holzknecht, "A priesthood of priests? The German Lutherans in Queensland," in Jurgensen 159.
[22] Holzknecht 159.

Brisbane,[23] moving to new areas of virgin agricultural land as these were unlocked. Many settlers of German and Scandinavian origin for example settled first in the Lockyer Valley before moving to the South Burnett.

Thus since 1868[24] most Queensland Lutherans have been rural dwellers and this pattern of rural occupation continued until well after the World War II. In 1947, the year Joh Bjelke-Petersen was first elected to the Queensland Parliament, 36% of Queensland's population lived in metropolitan Brisbane, but only 11.47% of the Lutheran population did. In that year only 22.5% of Lutherans lived in locations designated by the census authorities as `urban'; and in 1947 that classification included communities such as Roma, Dalby, Thursday Island and Hughenden,[25] places which today would be regarded by many Australians as being in the outback.

This rural base of Lutheranism made it much more subject to the influences of the frontier culture, in both religion and politics. Reflecting in 1983 on the struggle that produced what he described as `the essential Lutheran character' in Australia, Reinhard Mayer wrote:

> This struggle has produced a peculiar tenacity, sometimes seen even as an isolated arrogance. Whichever it is, we have retained a strongly

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[23] Holzknecht 160.
[24] In the 1868 Census, only 21.13% of persons recorded as Lutheran were living in areas designated by the Census as urban.
[25] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1947 Census.

> conservative stance in both theology and practice. . .[26]

Lutheranism was not exempt from the difficulties of finding enough cash and clergy that bedevilled other denominations in colonial Queensland. Holzknecht writes of the period before 1880 when the tide of German immigration flowing into Queensland was high:

> The increasing German Lutheran population meant that the scarcity of clergy became even more serious. Few of the immigrants were people of means. Most were very poor and had to struggle enormously before they could establish themselves in Queensland. There were language problems, difficulties of buying supplies, land and the issue of an education for their children.[27]

The ability of the Lutheran Church to nourish and sustain the faith of its people was made difficult by their rural domicile, but it was made even more difficult by Lutheranism's repeated propensity to split.

The history of the Lutheran Church in Australia has been one of precipitate schisms and painful reunification. As one writer on the history of German speaking settlers in Australia puts it:

> The early history of the Lutheran Church is the history of a confusing successions of synods, break-away factions, reunions, splits and splits within splinter groups, almost as if the break from a Europe with restrictions on heritage, tradition, politics and economic

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[26] R.J.Mayer, "Luther speaks in a new land," in J.H.Voight, ed., *New Beginnings. Germans in NSW and Queensland*, (Stuttgart: Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations, 1983) 184.
[27] Holzknecht 161.

> hardship had suddenly liberated the pastors, making them free to follow their own peculiarities on a personal and religious level.[28]

Following a personality clash and conflict over the doctrine of pre-millenialism between its two foundation pastors in 1846, Lutheranism in Australia had split into two main factions which were not reunited until 1966. Pastor Kavel who had arrived in 1838 was a pre-millennialist influenced by Pietism. His erstwhile colleague Pastor Gotthard Fritzsche rejected pre-millennialism.

The Fritzsche faction, which came to be known as the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia (ELSA) and then as the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (ELCA), had by 1887 established links with the conservative Missouri Synod in the USA. While the ELSA, could not correctly be termed `fundamentalist´, it "was historically pre-disposed to react strongly against liberal trends when they appeared,"[29] The Kavel faction, eventually to become the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia (UELCA) but also known as the Immanuel Synod, federated with the Queensland United German and Scandinavian Synod in 1910, and several other disparate Lutheran groups to form the UELCA in 1921.[30]

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[28] J.Vondra, *German-speaking settlers in Australia* (Melbourne: Cavalier Press, 1981) 161.
[29] Parker 69.
[30] While the ELSA was more dogmatic in theology it was more culturally accommodating in that it was more ready

Lutheranism in Queensland was fragmented further in 1883 when the Apostolic Church was founded in the Lockyer Valley, between Ipswich and Toowoomba, by H.F.Niemeyer. This movement expanded throughout south-east Queensland, drawing off members from the established Lutheran congregations in such places as Logan and Bundaberg.[31] The Apostolic Church was a pre-millennialist body inheriting, through its German parent body then known as the General Christian Apostolic Mission (Allgemeine Christliche Apostolische Mission), the teachings of Edward Irving (1792-1834)[32].

In 1885 the Danish Lutherans, led by Pastor J.C.Pedersen helped form Queensland's first organized body of Lutheranism, the United German and Scandinavian Lutheran Synod of Queensland. But four years later, in 1889, the first schism occurred when the Danish portion of the synod, some four pastors and ten congregations, withdrew. The comment by Lutheran historian Theile that, "[t]hey did not form an organization or a synod; they continued

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than the UELCA to use English in worship. Mayer wrote of "single-minded - some would say `thick-headed' - farming folk" working hard in a harsh land, sustained by, "a God who spoke in their German Bible, their solid Lutheran hymns and prayer books. Surely God's own native tongue was German!" Mayer 184. ELSA's cultural openness was possibly a consequence of its North American connection.

[31] Theile 31.

[32] Irving was a minister of the Church of Scotland and sometime assistant to Thomas Chalmers in Glasgow. His penchant for millenarian ideas and ecstatic utterances led to his ex-communication from the Church of Scotland. His followers formed the `Catholic Apostolic Church', of which the Allgemeine Christliche Apostolische Mision was the German form.

as separate and independent congregations,"[33] confirms a `congregationalism´ very frequent in Queensland. The Danish Lutherans were not intentionally congregationalist, for they made several attempts to secure the support and oversight of a wider body. The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church of North America provided a pastor and financial support in 1920. One of the responsibilities of the pastor, C.B.Larsen, was to minister to the congregation of Danish Lutherans at Edenvale, outside Kingaroy, whose last designated pastor had been Carl Bjelke-Petersen between 1896 and 1903. The link proved short-lived as did an association soon after with the state Church of Denmark.[34]

In 1938, Theile offered this comment on the fate of the Scandinavian Lutherans:

> Here and there the Scandinavians have joined the Lutheran congregations which now use the English language, but the greater number have lost their connection with the Lutheran Church from which they have sprung. Some have been absorbed by other denominations, but many of them have joined the throng of the unchurched and indifferent.[35]

When in 1911, a district of the ELSA was constituted in Queensland,[36] there were three Lutheran synods, (The ELSA, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Queensland and the United German and Scandinavian Lutheran Synod of

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[33] Theile 29.
[34] Theile 30.
[35] Theile 31.
[36] Theile 33.

Queensland), and a number of independent Scandinavian congregations, all represented in a population of just under 25,000 Lutherans.[37] War, however, was to prove a powerful stimulus to unity; and it is war that focuses our attention again on Lutheran understandings of the relationship between the Christian and the state.

V.

The impact of World War I on the Lutheran Church was shattering and the figures in Table 1 tell the story. In the space of twenty-two years, from 1911 to 1933 the number of Lutherans in Queensland halved, according to the census figures. Reading the accounts of those such as F.O.Theile who lived through it, one is struck by their anguish. Reading the later accounts of historians, one is struck by their outrage. Historian Gerhard Fischer describes World War I as, "the darkest chapter in the history of the German presence in Queensland."[38] Theile wrote twenty years after the war ended:

> The Lutheran Church suffered most severely. It was treated with utmost contempt and what hurt most, was that so much of that contempt found its loudest expression from the lips of ministers of the Gospel, even in the houses of divine worship.[39]

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[37] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1911 Census.
[38] G.Fischer, "The darkest chapter: Internment and deportation of enemy aliens in Queensland 1914-1920," in Jurgensen 22.
[39] Theile 43.

Allied war propaganda painted the German army as `robbing murdering hordes´.

During that war, a number of Lutheran pastors in Queensland were interned; Pastors Poland, Fischer and Fuhlbohm of the United German and Scandinavian Synod of Queensland, Pastors Milliatt, Frank, Treuz and Gutekinst of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (forerunner of the UELCA) and Pastor Seybold of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Queensland.[40] Three of the seven were Australian-born. None were ever found guilty of any offences.[41] Wartime restrictions made it difficult, if not impossible to sustain German language services in many Lutheran congregations. As Theile noted, "[t]he importation of German books was altogether prohibited, even Bibles were not permitted to be brought into the country if they were German".[42] The political climate was hostile and intimidating. No appeal was made to the provisions of Section 116 of the Commonwealth Constitution providing for freedom of religion. Neither the United German and Scandinavian Synod or the Evangelical Lutheran Synod met during the war years, but one of their first actions after the war was to consider unification proposals which bore fruit in 1921.

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[40] Theile 44.
[41] R.C.Bennett, "Public attitudes and official policy towards Germans in Queensland in World War I," unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1970, 172.
[42] Theile 63.

Raymond Evans writes of this time in Queensland that,

> Virtually all non-British groups even of Irish and North European origin fell under an intensified suspicion...Queensland with the largest number and widest range of non-British people experienced the impact of this process most dramatically.[43]

If Evans is correct, then amid the anti-German hysteria during and following World War I, even the Danes of the South Burnett must have felt the suspicions of their British-descended neighbours through their common Lutheranism. This may partly explain the pro-Royalist views of Bjelke-Petersen in later years as well as the unwillingness of the Danish Lutherans at Edenvale to become part of the UELCA after the war.[44] The excesses of xenophobia were not confined to the metropolitan area. In the aftermath of war the Toowoomba Lutheran church was arsoned and the Maryborough Lutheran Church was desecrated by a gang of drunken returned diggers.[45] "Little wonder," concluded Mayer, "that even whole Lutheran congregations faded out of existence during the war years of 1914-18."[46]

There is deep irony, and injustice in the manner in which the Lutheran pastors were treated in World War I. Even before the war, before anti-German hysteria broke out, a

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[43] R.L.Evans, *Loyalty and disloyalty. Social conflict on the Queensland homefront 1914-18* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987) 180.
[44] Maren Bjelke-Petersen, "Church Life in Early Kingaroy," roneo, (Fryer Library, University of Queensland, 1966) 3.
[45] Evans 149.
[46] Mayer 191.

number of them publicly reflected the classical Lutheran position on the Christian and the state and expressed themselves to be loyal subjects of the British Crown. In 1913, prior to the outbreak of war, nine pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod rejected an approach from the German Consul in Queensland, Dr Eugen Hirschfeld to assist in the formation of a German Language Society in Queensland at a worship service to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Kaiser Wilhelm's accession to the throne. In a statement published in the official church publication *Der Kirchenbote* they repudiated Hirschfeld saying:

> We, as British subjects do not...believe to have any reason to assist in the Jubilee celebration of a foreign ruler, nor to participate in it. We are standing under the protection not of the German but of the British Government, we enjoy all rights and privileges of British subjects, and therefore we believe owe complete and undivided patriotism to the Government.
>
> We are not, as is often alleged, missionaries of German culture (Kultur), but we keep up the German language...to explain the Gospel to our German citizens.[47]

In the inter-war years Queensland Lutherans struggled desperately to demonstrate their loyalty and allegiance to the values of the dominant Anglo-Celtic culture. In 1932 - with the spectre of Nazism which would again traumatize Australian Lutheranism just over the horizon - the Queensland district synod of the UELCA was held in in

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[47] Fischer 44.

the South Burnett town of Murgon. At a civic welcome by the shire council, synod president, Pastor A.R.Reuther said that he appreciated very much that the civic body was recognizing the church:

> The Lutheran Church always strives to inculcate in its members the spirit of loyalty to their King and Country, and in their instructions to young people they teach that spirit of loyalty. [48].

One wonders whether a twenty-one year old Sunday School teacher from nearby Kingaroy was one of the young people present. Certainly the sentiments expressed by Reuther would have been transmitted to him by his elders and mentors. The local Murgon pastor, A.E.Reuther followed his namesake, observing that when he first arrived in the region in 1915, as anti-German feeling was growing, " . . . Lutherans were then an unknown quantity and this expression of the Shire Council towards them. . . showed how they had progressed."[48].

While proclaiming their loyalty to their adopted country, UELCA pastors also retained great pride in their German heritage. It was a pride which would see some of them interned during World War II, mainly on account of their promotion and support of the Australian visit of the German war hero, Count Felix von Luckner in 1938.[50]. Von

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48. *South Burnett Times* (hereafter *SBT*) 22.4.1932.
48. *SBT* 22.4.1932.
50. For an account of von Luckner's visit see J. A. Moses, "German/Australian `Cultural Policy' and the Count von Luckner visit to Queensland in 1938," and Kay

Luckner was regarded by Australian authorities as a Nazi spy, a conclusion held by later historical research to be unfounded.[51] Indeed Australian security officials regarded von Luckner's cultivation of the EUCLA pastors as one of the major achievements of his visit.[52]

The ELSA distanced itself from the entire visit, in Moses' view, because they were strictly confessional and "as good Lutherans they would fear God and honour the King (I Peter 2.17)," in whatever land they lived.[53] In its official history published in 1956 but written a decade before, the ELSA was critical of UELCA for its pro-Germanism and its unwillingness to conduct services in English.[54]

In southeast Queensland von Luckner visited Beenleigh, Boonah, Toowoomba, Gayndah, Mundubbera and Maryborough as well as Murgon in the South Burnett. En route to Murgon he made a brief stop over in Kingaroy. Among the promoters of von Luckner's visit was Pastor Gutekinst of Toowoomba. Gutekinst was one of the keynote speakers at the Lutheran centenary celebration synodical service in 1938 at which a resolution of loyalty was passed.[55]

Saunders "Enemies of the empire? The internment of Germans in Queensland during World War II," in Jurgensen.
[51] Moses 101.
[52] Moses 109.
[53] Moses 103.
[54] A.Brauer, *Under the Southern Cross. History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1956) 342-44.
[55] *Kingaroy Herald* (Hereafter *KH*) 9.5.1938.

Another supporter was Pastor Max Lohe, who told a Lutheran district youth and Sunday School teachers convention in Murgon in 1937 attended by Joh and Neta Bjelke-Petersen that, "Youth must be loyal to Christ, to the nation, to the home..."[56] an echo of Reuther's words in the same town just five years before.

In spite of their oft-proclaimed loyalty prior to the declaration of war against Germany in 1939, UELCA Pastors Gutekinst, Finger, Hiller, Lohe, Monz, Rogge, Rohde and Theile were all placed under surveillance by the security services as were five ELSA pastors: Borgas, Bode, Reimers, Schultz and Rosenblatt. The UELCA pastors were under surveillance for several reasons. Obviously the authorities felt that as churches were a focal point of the German community, the pastors had opportunity to propound subversion. Secondly, German was more commonly spoken in the UELCA and thirdly, the older pastors were thought more susceptible to Nazi propaganda.[57]

The activities of the ELSA pastors were observed despite the ELSA's refusal to become involved in the von Luckner visit, and the repudiation of Nazism in their official journal, *Australian Lutheran*.[58] Saunders concludes that there is no evidence of Nazi Party membership or of pro-Nazi organizations among the pastors, with the possible

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[56] *KH* 14.5.1937.
[57] Saunders 64.
[58] Saunders 65.

exception of Gutekinst, who was a supporter of Hitler. He wrote to Georg Schwartz, superintendent of the Lutheran mission to Aborigines at at Hopevale, near Cooktown, in 1938,"I believe that every True Christian is thanking God for the Führer whom God has sent the German nation."[58]

After World War II, Lutheran fortunes revived slightly with an infusion of immigrants from war-shattered Europe. The struggle for unity of faith in a pluralistic culture, a central preoccupation of Lutheran leaders for over a century, reached a state of partial completion in 1966, with organic union between the ELSA and the UELCA, although the union spawned the fundamentalist Evangelical Lutheran Churches of the Reformation. Based in Queensland, the ELCR had congregations in the traditional Lutheran heartland of Kingaroy, Lowood, Woombye, Toowoomba as well as Brisbane.[60] Another result of this union was a tendency among former UELCA Lutherans who showed some openness to ecumenism to withdraw from that involvement.

All these factors; rural settlement, ecclesiastical disorder, disunity and war have shaped what Reinhard Mayer has termed the `essential Lutheran character´:

> . . . the essential Lutheran character has been determined by struggle - firstly (sic) for economic survival in the face of harsh climatic conditions; secondly for identity in what

[58] Saunders 66.
[60] R.Humphreys and R.Ward, *Religious bodies in Australia* (Melbourne: np, 1988) 33.

> became a hostile political climate; thirdly to found unity of faith in the face of the varied backgrounds; and fourthly to preserve faith in the face of the great variety of Churches and Sects, a situation unknown in the German and Scandinavian homelands.[61]

Yet the Lutherans in Queensland were not alone in facing the demands of serving a widely spread flock, while hampered by ecclesiastical disorder and disunity. The religious culture of Queensland was formed by these and other influences, and it is to that formation that we now turn.

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[61] Mayer 184.

CHAPTER 3

PIETY AND PROSPERITY: THEMES IN THE RELIGIOUS CULTURE OF A FRONTIER SOCIETY.

God in making the earth never intended it should be occupied by men so incapable of appreciating its resources as the Aborigines of Australia. The white man had indeed only carried out the intention of the Creator in coming and settling down in the territory of the natives. God's first command to man was `Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth'.

Rev John Dunmore Lang,
in an address to the Moreton Bay
Friends of the Aborigines Society, 1856.[1]

In every country and in every age the farming districts were the chief abode of faith and the choicest dwelling place of virtue.

Robert Dunne,
Catholic Bishop of Brisbane,
in an address at Highfields, Toowoomba in 1884.[2]

I.

Writing about the character of Australia religion, Richard Campbell inferred that Queensland's religious culture, as an extension of a Melbourne-Sydney axis, is `sectarian-fundamentalist':

> Religious life in Melbourne has always been more urbane, more ecumenical, more catholic in its social vision, more Tory in its

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[1] Quoted in Henry Reynolds, *Frontier* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987) 171.
[2] Reported in *The Australian* 1.3.1884, quoted by Neil J.Byrne, "Bishop Robert Dunne," unpublished M.A.Qual. thesis, University of Queensland, 1985, 37.

> conservatism, whereas Sydney has been more assertive, more sectarian-fundamentalist in my special sense, a tendency which become stronger the further north one goes.[3]

The `special sense´ in which Campbell uses the term `sectarian-fundamentalist´ is one he arrived at after consideration of a wide range of adjectives including `positivistic´, `assertive´, ` conservative´, `dogmatic´ and `authoritarian´, "all ...arrows," says Campbell,

> each pointing towards an unnamed character which can yet be recognized...not only in those Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, perhaps Presbyterians - who might be expected to manifest it, but also as a strong tendency in the nationally small but locally strong Lutherans, in the conservative style of much Roman Catholic churchmanship and piety, to say nothing of the remarkable Anglican Diocese of Sydney.[4]

One of the arrows in Campbell´s quiver seems to be missing. It is the arrow marked `pietistic´, for pietism in religious practice, along with congregationalism in polity, are the predominant characteristics of the religious culture of Queensland.

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[3] R.Campbell, "The character of Australian religion," *Meanjin* 36.2 (1977): 184.

[4] Campbell 183. Such an observation also says nothing of the even more remarkable Anglican Diocese of North Queensland and the Roman Catholic diocese of Cairns, which from its establishment in 1877 functioned under direct Roman control as the Vicariate of Cooktown until 1941. Note John Garrett´s comment that, "Anglican churchmanship in Queensland was high; the further north the diocese the higher it seemed to get." *To live among the stars. Christian origins in Oceania* (Geneva: WCC, 1982) 245 and see M.A.Endicott, "A history of the Roman Catholic Vicariate of Cooktown 1877-1941," unpublished PhD thesis, University of Queensland, 1984.

Before discussing pietism in the Queensland context, it is useful to review what pietism was originally, and to distinguish it from fundamentalism. Pietism is different from but related to Puritanism, and originated in seventeenth century Germany as a reaction to the lifeless, dogmatic orthodoxy of Lutheranism at that time. The founders instituted small groups meeting in homes for prayer and bible reading. The movement, while not wishing to separate from the established church, also proclaimed the priesthood of all believers. Its subsequent influences have been diverse, and include the Moravianism of von Zinzendorf and the Methodism of John Wesley. According to Ernst Stoeffler, historian of classical Pietism:

> It had no one system of theology, no one integrating doctrine, no one particular type of polity, no one liturgy, no geographical homogeneity.[5]

It placed "emphasis... upon inner identification with God," and was a way of expressing the faith, not a faith in itself, recognizing "the centrality of the saving relationship within which exists a considerable degree of intimacy between God and the individual soul," as well as a strong emphasis on the moral reformation of the individual, which risked descent into legalism.[6] Finally, according to Stoeffler,

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[5] F.Ernest Stoeffler, *The rise of evangelical Pietism* (Leiden: Brill, 1971) 13.
[6] Stoeffler 10, 15.

> ...part of Pietistic preaching has always been the conception of the two ways - the broad way which leads to destruction and the narrow way which leads to life.[7]

Pietism predates fundamentalism and is regarded, along with revivalism, by historians of fundamentalism such as George Marsden, as fundamentalism's tap roots.[8]

Revivalism has been defined as,

> a type of religious worship and practice centring in evangelical revivals, or outbursts of mass religious fervour, and stimulated by intensive preaching and prayer meetings.[9]

It has been suggested that Australia lacks a revivalist tradition.[10] Certainly Australia has never experienced a religious revival in the manner of the Wesleyan revival in eighteenth century Britain, or the First and Second Great Awakenings in the United States, but Australia is essentially a derivative society - especially where religion is concerned. That derivative character means that British and American revivalists have visited Australia since European colonization.

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[7] Stoeffler 17.
[8] G.Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American culture: the shaping of twentieth century Evangelicalism 1870-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980) 7.
In the American context Marsden also sees "evangelicalism, revivalism,... the holiness movements, millenarianism, Reformed confessionalism, Baptist traditionalism, and other denominational orthodoxies," as also contributing to the make up of fundamentalism. Marsden 4.
[9] F.L.Cross & E.A.Livingstone, eds., *Oxford dictionary of the Christian church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974) 1183.
[10] Breward 23; Bollen, *Religion* 24.

In the nineteenth century they included the American Methodist William `California´ Taylor, who in the 1860s, "added thousands to the membership of the Wesleyan Methodist churches" in Australia;[11] Dr A.N.Somerville, an independent Free Church evangelist from Scotland who visited Australia, including Brisbane in the late 1870s[12]; Reuben Torrey in 1901; and on two occasions - in 1909 and 1912-13 - J. Wilbur Chapman and Charles Alexander. Torrey and Chapman each in turn assumed the mantle of Dwight L. Moody; and both were men of considerable theological knowledge holding doctorates in divinity. Yale graduate Torrey, a strict literalist in matters of biblical interpretation, who frequently attacked science and higher criticism in his evangelistic addresses, later became one of the fathers of American fundamentalism, while Chapman became moderator of the Presbyterian Church.[13]

Dwight Moody and Ira Sankey never visited Australia, although they were invited. Sankey´s hymns were advertised as a feature of Sunday evening evangelistic services held in a Brisbane theatre in the 1880s, and Moody´s sermons were frequently reprinted in the

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[11] William Taylor, *American dictionary of biography* 18: 345.
[12] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 19.12.1884.
[13] William G.McLoughlin, *Modern revivalism. Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham* (New York: Ronald Press, 1959) 365-388 passim.

Queensland Evangelical Standard.[14] Perhaps the fact that Moody and Sankey did not visit partly accounts for the fact that fundamentalism in Australia remained 'incipient', for Sandeen holds that in the United States Moody's evangelistic enterprises laid the foundations for the later emergence of fundamentalism.[15] In addition to revival meetings, the colonial capital witnessed no less than three temperance missions between 1875 and 1885.[16] Furthermore Chapman's preaching was regarding as placing "primary stress on personal morality,"[17] and he was a strong advocate of prohibition.[18]

In the mid nineteen twenties the South African Pentecostal Fredrick Van Eyk came to Australia, and according to Chant, "greatly strengthened the foundations of Pentecostalism" in Australia,[19] particularly Queensland, where he visited the South Burnett district and preached in "a hall crowded with listeners" in September 1936.[20] In the decades since the Second World War, Australia has seen the Alan Walker's Mission to the Nation, under the auspices of the Methodist Church in the

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[14] For example in *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 19.8.1882.
[15] E.R.Sandeen, *The origins of Fundamentalism.Toward an historical interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968) 16-17.
[16] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 3.9.1886.
[17] Winthrop Hudson, *Religion in America* (New York: Scribner's, 1973) 364.
[18] Martin Marty, *Righteous empire* (New York: Dial Press, 1970) 214.
[19] Barry Chant, *Heart of fire: the story of Australian Pentecostalism* (Adelaide: House of Tabor, 1984) 103 ff.
[20] *KH* 7.9.1936.

early nineteen fifties, and the American evangelist Billy Graham in 1959 and 1968. With the exception of Walker and other minor evangelists like the Church of Christ leader Jas E. Thomas - both of whom visited the South Burnett- [21] all the revivalists came from overseas. Bollen makes the point that the Christianity imported into Australia was already "revived" and that "revivalism was a less explosive force in Australia,"

> ...because there was no reaction in Australia against an eighteenth century formalism or indifference to missionary duty. The Christianity which reached Australia had already been warmed by the evangelical revival.[22]

He also observes that revivalism was unnecessary because of state support for church extension.[23] On the other hand pietism, also imported from Britain and Europe, thrived in the isolation of Australia.

II.

While acknowledging that fundamentalism is a term which can be applied to "all profession of strict adherence to (especially Protestant) orthodoxy in the matter of Biblical interpretation,"[24] it is important, certainly in historical terms, to emphasize the distinction between pietism and fundamentalism, because of the loose way the term has been used by a number of political scientists

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[21] *KH* 1.10.1937; 22.7.1954.
[22] Bollen, *Religion* 26.
[23] Bollen, *Religion* 24.
[24] Cross and Livingstone 542.

and historians in relation to the political and religious culture of Queensland.[25]

Fundamentalism is a religious movement of North American origin which arose around the turn of the century as a reaction among theologically conservative Protestants concerned about the impact and influence of nineteenth century scientific methodologies and ideas on Biblical interpretation and Christian theology. Meeting in Niagara on the US-Canadian border one such group issued a statement of belief defining the five basic beliefs of fundamentalism. They are: the verbal inerrancy of Scripture; the divinity of Jesus Christ; the Virgin Birth; the substitutionary theory of the Atonement and finally, the physical resurrection and bodily return of Christ. From 1909 onwards these doctrines were widely propagated through the English speaking world in a series of twelve tracts entitled *The Fundamentals*; hence the name fundamentalist. The division of American Protestantism into fundamentalist and modernist groups followed. Fundamentalism's raison d'etre was - and is - the battle against modernism, and it is primarily a twentieth century movement, owing as much to the

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[25] Hugh Lunn, *Johannes Bjelke-Petersen: a political biography* 45; Fitzgerald, *From 1915* 224; M. B. Cribb, "Queensland Politics," *Current Affairs Bulletin* 51.1 (1975): 29, and M.B.Cribb, "Queensland," in B.Costar & D.Woodward, *Country to National* (Sydney: George Allen and Unwin, 1985) 78.

intellectual rigour of Princetonian Calvinism as it does to the affective appeal of Dispensationalism.[26]

David Parker's study of fundamentalism in Australia found little evidence of militant, separatist fundamentalism, observing instead an "incipient fundamentalism";[27] a finding which gives credence to Ian Breward's conclusion about Australian Christianity having, "a rather practical character, often uninterested in the spiritual and intellectual depth of some of our forgotten forebears."[28] Fundamentalism is a recent adjunct to the religious culture of Queensland and its political manifestations have been the comparatively short-lived organizations like the Festival of Light, the Community Standards Organization, the Society To Outlaw Pornography and the Campaign Against Regressive Education. Of more lasting influence are the Creation Science movement, and the fundamentalist schools, such as the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) system, exotic transplants from the United States which have flourished in the unregulated educational environment that exists in Queensland.

All the Protestant and Pentecostal churches contain members who hold fundamentalist views - the latter more than the former -but fundamentalism as a religious

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[26] Sandeen 3.
[27] Parker 71.
[28] Breward 88.

phenomenon in Queensland is fragmented, and indeed much of what has be described, and even derided, as fundamentalism, has been the assertion of old fashioned evangelical pietism.[28]

Thus while fundamentalism is a recent accretion to the religious culture of Queensland, pietism on the other hand has deep roots; roots which go back as far as the Presbyterian divine and controversialist John Dunmore Lang (1799-1878), one of the earliest and most ardent advocates of the development of the colonial outpost which became the state of Queensland. Indeed Lang's ideas and activities also contain the seeds of other elements we have deemed characteristic of the religious culture of Queensland: sectarianism, congregationalism and the ethos of `development'.

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[28] M.Trainor, "Fundamentalism: a growing concern for the Australian Catholic Church," *Compass* 19.2 (1985) 7-14. At the time of writing the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane has a taskgroup investigating the drift of Catholics to fundamentalist groups.

III.

Lang's life and achievements have been thoroughly chronicled,[30] and some of his activities studied in detail.[31] Some scholarly attention has been given to his ideas, especially his political ideals,[32] but insufficient notice has been taken of the contribution of Lang's ideas and activities - especially his ideas on colonization and economic development - to the religious culture of eastern Australia in the nineteenth century, and in particular the religious culture of Port Phillip

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[30] D.W.A.Baker, *Days of wrath. A life of John Dunmore Lang* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1985) is regarded as the definitive work on Lang. See also Ian McLaren, *John Dunmore Lang. A comprehensive bibliography of a turbulent Australian Scot* (Parkville: University of Melbourne Library, 1985); *John Dunmore Lang. Chiefly autobiographical 1799-1887*, 2 vols., comp. and ed., Archibald Gilchrist, (Melbourne: Jedgram, 1951) as well as Lang's *Reminiscences of my life and times*, ed. D.W.A.Baker (Melbourne: Heinneman, 1972) and *An historical and statistical account of New South Wales*, 2 vols., (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Low and Serle, 1852).

[31] W.S.McPheat, "John Dunmore Lang with special reference to his activities in Queensland," unpublished M.A. thesis University of Queensland 1952; J.H.Warnsborough, "The early career of John Dunmore Lang 1823-1840," unpublished M.A. thesis, Sydney University 1971; L.W.Evans, "John Dunmore Lang and education," unpublished M.A. thesis, Melbourne University, 1941; Rosemary Lawson, "Dr John Dunmore Lang and immigration," unpublished M.A. thesis, Australian National University, 1966 and P.C.Weekes, "The Colonist," unpublished B.A. (Hons) thesis, Australian National University, 1973.

[32] See for example K.Elford, "A prophet without honour: the political ideals of John Dunmore Lang," *Royal Australian Historical Society Journal* 54.2 (1968): 161-175: R.J.McDonald, "Republicanism in the fifties: the case of John Dunmore Lang," *Royal Australian Historical Society Journal* 50.4 (1964) 262-276 and D.Headon, "Going for the whole hog. J.D.Lang's republicanism and the American connection," *Westerly* 1 (1984): 25-33.

and Moreton Bay. Lang was more of an ideologue than a theologian, and those who would look at his theological principles in isolation risk ignoring the impact of other wider, more secular influences.

Lang would have argued that the Bible was the fount of all his principles, writing in 1852:

> My views on these fundamental principles of government - universal male suffrage, perfect political equality and popular election, generally referred to by political writers as chartism, communism and socialism - have stemmed from the Word of God which endureth for ever...[33]

Yet there is ample evidence that Lang's ideas were influenced as much by the geographical and social contexts in which he found himself as much as by the Bible. For example in his introduction to *Cooksland* he wrote that,

> The vast territory of New South Wales has evidently been designed by the Great Architect of the universe to form three separate and independent Colonies or States.[34]

In fact this idea clearly comes from his observations of the American federal system in operation. On another occasion he wrote,

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[33] Source unknown quoted by A.Gilchrist, "In search of John Dunmore Lang," *Victorian Historical Magazine* (February 1951): 170. Lang's statement is quoted uncritically by McPheat 109. Neither Lang, Gilchrist nor McPheat mention that on one trip to England Lang supped with the English radicals Cobden and Bright and made submissions to a House of Commons committee of which they were members.

[34] J.D.Lang, *Cooksland in Northeastern Australia*, (London: Longmans, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1848) v.

> The spirit of colonial nationality...is no accidental feeling; it is unquestionably of Divine implantation, and designed not for evil, but for good.[35]

Lang's vision was of a Christian Australia, "one of the most important centres of moral and Christian influence on the face of the globe."[36] He wrote in 1857:

> There is clearly ...no part of the habitable globe on which it is of more importance at this moment to plant a thoroughly Christian people than the shores of Australia. With half a million such people ...Australia would have a moral machinery to bring to bear on the heathenism of the earth... I believe it is destined, in the Councils of Infinite Wisdom, to be the seat of one of the first Christian nations of the earth, and that while the number of its Christian people will yet be as the sand of the sea which cannot be measured or numbered it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.[37]

Yet it was Protestant sons of the living God for whom Lang was looking. In *Cooksland* which was directed to the "Christian and philanthropic portion of the British public" to persuade them of the possibility of agriculture, "by means of European free labour,"[38] Lang derided Roman Catholic and Anglican influence in the northern colony:

> ...the rapid progress and the threatening aspect of Popery and Puseyism - the Beast and the Image of the Beast - in the Australian Colonies, render it indispensably necessary, for the interests of our common Protestantism in the Southern Hemisphere, that a great effort in the way of extensive

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[35] J.D.Lang, *Freedom and independence for the golden lands of Australia,* (Sydney: F. Cunninghame, 1857) 24.
[36] Lang, *Freedom* 399.
[37] Lang, *Freedom* 399-400.
[38] Gilchrist 421.

> colonization should be made...and that effort must be made NOW or NEVER.[38]

In Queensland, Lang's vision found concrete expression in the promotion of large scale emigration to Moreton Bay which resulted in three shiploads of emigrants landing in the colonies in 1849. As the first ship, the *Fortitude* left Gravesend for Moreton Bay in September 1848, Lang commissioned the emigrants with a rousing sermon on deck:

> Divine Providence, for the wisest and most beneficent purposes is now saying to many of the very best men in our country and the most attached to all that is good in it, as was said to Abraham of old: `Get ye up from out of your country and your kindred and from your father's house into a land that I will show you; and I will make of you there a great nation'. I trust that he will make of you a great nation, there to reproduce and transmit to posterity at the uttermost parts of the earth all that is really valuable in the institutions of your fatherland. The land wither you go is a good land, a land which the Lord hath blessed, a land in which there is abundance of everything that is needful for the sustenance of man, for the advancement of civilization and for Christianity.
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> ...Remember therefore that the eyes of many will be upon you in the matter...In your future sojourning, remember the sabbath to keep it holy, and do not forget to rear an altar wherever you pitch your tent in the wilderness. Honor the Lord with your substance; so shall your barns be filled with plenty. May the angel of the covenant watch over and guide you.[40]

Three elements of Lang's sermon which deserve attention: the chosen people motif, the `promised land' imagery and the idea that righteousness brings earthly riches. While the principles in this address can be traced to Lang's

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[38] Lang, *Cooksland* 484.
[40] Gilchrist 444.

Scottish Calvinism, and were reinforced by his exposure to Christianity in the United States, echoes of this sermon have been heard among Protestants and Catholics in Queensland ever since.[41]

Calvinism, more than Lutheranism, saw the Old and New Testaments as a totality. Lutheranism tended to opt for the view that the Law of the Old Testament was superseded by the Gospel of the New. Thus Lang's Calvinism saw in the Old Testament stories of God's covenantal relationship with his people and his promise to them of a land of their own. A reading of Lang shows his propensity for quoting the Old Testament. The frontispiece of *Freedom and independence* carries a quotation from Hosea[42] and the reverse of the title page of the 1852 edition of *An historical and statistical account of New South Wales* carries quotations from the Book of Judges: "We have seen the land, and behold it is very good - (xviii.9)," and from Genesis: "And the gold of that land is good - (ii.12)."[43] In conversation with the influential Free Churchman Thomas Chalmers in Scotland, Lang said he was "accustomed to take as my maxim in political economy the divine commandment recorded in the first chapter of Genesis."[44]

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[41] For these echoes see the discussion on prosperity theology in Chapter 5.
[42] Lang, *Freedom and Independence* ii.
[43] Lang, *Historical and Statistical Account* 2: ii.
[44] Lang, *Freedom and Independence*, 1852 edn., 8.

Lang's enduring legacy lies not only in the immigrants landed from the *Fortitude*, the *Chaseley* and the *Lima* in 1849, but also in the party of German missionaries he brought to establish a mission to Aborigines at Moreton Bay in 1838.[45] Indeed, one of the German missionaries, the Rev Christopher Eipper, urged Lang to recruit,

> a great number of pious families from the heart of Germany that also this nation may enjoy the bounty and the good of this land, which providence seems to have preserved as the receptacle of the overgrown population of Europe.[46]

Eipper did not see those pious families as engaging in missionary activity, but coming as they would from the heart of Germany, becoming at the very least the backbone of their adopted country. For as McPheat observed of the German Mission at Moreton Bay, that

> ...while it failed in its primary, evangelical purpose, nevertheless contributed to the growth and development of the northern state.[47]

Eipper's plea to Lang did not fall on deaf ears. Lang wrote of the *Fortitude* emigrants who were despatched a decade later, that they were selected,

> ...on much the same principle as that on which Cromwell selected his first troop; they were all, or nearly all, Christian people, members of evangelical churches, and exemplary in their character and conduct.[48]

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[45] W.Neil Gunson, "The Nundah missionaries," *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland*, 6.3. (1960-61) 511-39.
[46] McPheat 69.
[47] McPheat 81.
[48] Lang, *Historical and Statistical Account* 373.

To which McPheat adds: "What evidence is available on this point would indicate this was no extravagant claim."[48]

The character of the emigrants may well have been unimpeachable, but the character of their sponsor was not. In his attempts to secure land for his charges, Lang perpetuated what biographer Baker has described caustically as, "an attempt to defraud the Colonial Government to the extent of some 3500 pounds".[50] There were complaints from emigrants and a great deal of official correspondence was generated. The combination of pious rhetoric with misrepresentation and less than honest dealing, all in the cause of developing the colony, may be as much as part of Lang's legacy to Queensland as the character of his immigrants.

Lang's emigrants were pious, God-fearing people, assured of the blessing of God on their new land and their labours in it, and charged with the responsibility of being part of a developing Christian commonwealth. In these terms their contribution to the formation of the religious culture of Queensland was substantial. But what of their political sympathies? Whereas in twentieth century Queensland, pietistic Protestantism became a pocket borough of conservative politics, in the mid-nineteenth century, evangelical Protestants tended to be

[48] McPheat 42-43.
[50] Baker 267.

urban liberals ranged against the power of large rural landholders. Morrison describes Fortitude Valley where many of the emigrants settled as "a centre of radicalism"[51] from whence the Queensland Liberal Association was formed in 1859. In Morrison's estimate, Lang's emigrants formed the nucleus of a grouping of urban liberals in Queensland, who owed at least a little to the non-conformist traditions of English Dissent,[52] a tradition which lasted until liberalism was washed out of Queensland political life by the rising tide of organized labour. Yet, in Queensland it was also a political tradition marked by a certain illiberal sectarianism, in contrast to the support given to Catholic emancipation by English nonconformists.

IV.

Unlike New South Wales, Roman Catholicism in Queensland knew no spring flowering of English Benedictine influence. In Queensland, Roman Catholic priests and people were predominantly Irish, an influence determinative of the Catholic contribution to the religious culture of Queensland. Polding made his first visit to Moreton Bay in 1843, mainly to establish four Passionists in a short-lived mission to Aborigines at

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[51] A.A.Morrison, "Religion and politics in Queensland to 1881," *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland* 4.4 (Dec 1951): 460.
[52] Morrison 459.

Dunwich on Stradbroke Island.[53] Like Lang, Rome was initially interested in the evangelization of the Aboriginal people of north-eastern Australia. Almost as an afterthought Polding despatched two priests to the Moreton Bay settlement after his return to Sydney. Similarly, the Roman Catholic Vicariate of Cooktown (which became the diocese of Cairns in 1941) was established in 1877 primarily as a mission to Aborigines.

Moreton Bay was served by two priests until the arrival of the first Catholic bishop of Brisbane, James Quinn, after Separation in 1859. With Quinn landed five priests and six Sisters of Mercy. During Quinn's episcopate, which lasted until his death in 1881, his major preoccupations were immigration, education and land,[54] concerns which - along with sectarian anxiety at the growth of Catholic influence in Queensland - considerably exercised the mind of Lang.

Sectarianism is an enduring feature of Queensland's religious and political culture. Its influence in the Queensland politics, especially the police force, was deemed worthy of comment by Commissioner Fitzgerald in his *Report* in 1989.[55] Of sectarianism's pervasive

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[53] The story of this venture is told in Osmund Thorpe, *First Catholic mission to the Australian Aborigines* (Sydney: Pelligrini, 1950).
[54] Y.M.McLay, *James Quinn: First Catholic bishop of Brisbane* (Armadale, Vic: Graphic Books, 1980) xvi.
[55] *Report* of the Commission of Inquiry into Possible Illegal Activities and Associated Police Misconduct (Brisbane: Government Printer, 1989) 30 (Hereafter cited

influence in colonial Queensland, Neil Byrne wrote that, "the cleavage between Catholicism and Nonconformity remained the colony's widest and most bitter division."[56] Suttor made the observation that the pressures on Quinn's infant diocese, "were not so distinctly Protestant, they were rather secular-liberal."[57] Suttor perhaps misconstrues the character, and thus the political influence, of Protestant Nonconformity in Brisbane at this time, for as Morrison showed, as urban liberals the Nonconformists pursued policies which were secularist. Suttor himself acknowledges that Quinn was confronted with, "an anti-Catholic social and political ascendancy and its trenchant press."[58] In the eighteen sixties Non-conformists controlled Brisbane's two newspapers, the *Queensland Guardian* and the *Moreton Bay Courier*.[58]

The sectarian battle raged strongest and longest over state aid for denominational schools. Before Quinn's arrival in Queensland, the the infant colony's fledgling parliament had moved to eliminate future denominational aid. With Bishop Tufnell, newly consecrated as the first Anglican Bishop of Queensland as an ally,[60] Quinn

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as *Fitzgerald Report*); See also the reference to M.J.Ahern's defeat of Masons in 1968 and 1987. *CM* 6.12.1987.

[56] Byrne 41.

[57] Suttor 281.

[58] Suttor 283.

[58] Suttor 294.

[60] Edward Wyndham Tufnell (1814-1896) Anglican Bishop of Brisbane 1859-1874. Rayner, "Church of England" 627.

sought redress. Unsuccessful, Quinn then responded by promoting Catholic immigration and the establishment his own schools.[61]

The churches of Queensland paid a high price for their sectarianism. In essence, sectarianism led to secularism, the near-exclusion of religion from the school curriculum and the impoverishment of denominational schools for want of state aid. Nearly a century was to pass before the needs of denominational schools, especially Catholic parochial schools, compelled government support once again. This renewed provision of state aid for religious schools also expedited the development of schools by neo-pietist groups in the nineteen seventies and nineteen eighties.

Furthermore, did the exclusion of religion from the state education system, legitimize the exclusion of religion from the entire public domain, and thus promote the notion of religious belief and practice as a private matter in colonial Queensland? Did such privatization of religion became part of the religious culture of Queensland, surfacing in the Bjelke-Petersen years as the argument that religion and politics should not be mixed; that there was a difference between the political

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For the state aid debate see J.R.Lawry, "Bishop Tufnell and Queensland education," *Melbourne Studies in Education*, 1966, 181-203.

[61] T.P.Boland, "The Queensland Immigration Society," *Australasian Catholic Record* 39.3 (1962): 205-212; 39.4 (1962): 298-304; 40.3 (1963) 192-201.

(public) and spiritual (private) concerns of the Christian believer, and that for the church the latter were of legitimate concern, while the former were not?

V.

Quinn preached the virtues of hard work and personal piety.[62] His successor, Dunne, encouraged his people to "remain true to the doctrine of Rome and the devotional practice of Ireland."[63] Dunne arrived in Queensland with Quinn in 1861, having served under Quinn on the staff of St Laurence O'Toole Seminary in Dublin. In 1868 he moved to Toowoomba, and in 1882 was consecrated bishop of Brisbane, becoming archbishop in 1887. He remained archbishop for the next thirty years.[64]

One of Dunne's primary concerns was the improvement of the social conditions and the social position of the Catholic laity. While Quinn had used the Queensland Government's land grant system as an inducement for Irish immigration, as a means to an end, Dunne believed that life on the land promoted the strong family life which led to both piety and prosperity. He believed that next to the Sacraments, "a virtuous home was the chief channel of God's grace to man," and that, "such homes are plenty

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[62] McLay, "James Quinn" 156.
[63] Byrne 25.
[64] "Robert Dunne" *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.

where men settle on farms."[65] In 1874, Dunne wrote home to his brother in Ireland,

> I have striven to turn the whole energy of my people into `settling the land', making homes and independence for themselves and their children.[66]

Duhig recalled how Dunne, when parish priest of Toowoomba,

> After reading the Sunday's Gospel...generally read from the *Government Gazette* particulars of land on the Darling Downs thrown open for selection and dilated on his favourite theme.[67]

Shortly after his consecration, Dunne addressed farmers in the Logan district saying,

> The only barrier against socialism and anarchy was the broadening out amongst the people of the proprietorship of the nation's land. Nihilism is dominant in Russia, socialism is spreading throughout the British Empire simply because people are excluded in the former, and are daily being excluded in the latter from all right except to labour for the capitalist...[68]

So strong was Dunne's commitment to ruralizing his people, that he was wary of the emerging alliance between Catholics and the Labor Party, which he saw as a proletarianizing influence on the Catholic labouring class.[69] Dunne and Quinn had both witnessed poverty and suffering in Ireland, troubles whose basic cause was the

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[65] Byrne 34.
[66] quoted Byrne 19.
[67] James Duhig, *Crowded years* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson 1947) 25.
[68] *Australian* 20.1.1883 quoted Byrne 26.
[69] O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church* 289; Byrne 35.

land tenure system, and to Dunne especially, the agitation of the Land League was no solution.

It was not only the metropolitans who were attracted to the rural ideal. Bishop Byrne, the first bishop of Toowoomba promoted a "Catholicism close to the soil" and Bishop McGuire, the first bishop of Townsville, was "an enthusiastic promoter of land settlement."[70] Dunne's view of the land as "the chief abode of faith and the choicest dwelling place of virtue" was shared by his priests: Quinn's nephews, James Horan at Warwick and his brothers Andrew at Ipswich and Matthew at Gympie; and the Italian priests Capra at Roma and Scortachini in the Logan Valley.[71] To some extent Duhig shared what Byrne called Dunne's "romantic fascination" with the land.[72] Duhig wrote in his autobiography that "...the bush had, and still has, its fascination. Out there one seems closer to nature and to God."[73]

This idealization of life on the land runs as a constant stream through Catholic social thought in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Dunne, for example, anticipated Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* with its emphases on the family as the locus of society, its proclamation of private property as a

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[70] M.E.R.MacGinley, "Catholicism in Queensland, 1910-1935: a social history," unpublished PhD thesis, University of Queensland, 1982, 422 and 428.
[71] Byrne 38.
[72] Byrne 33.
[73] Duhig 69.

natural right and its condemnation of socialism; principles restated by Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno* in 1931. From such sources grew the Catholic Social Studies Movement,[74] whose activities precipitated the ALP split in 1955, and led to the establishment of the Queensland Labor Party, which later became the Democratic Labor Party.

Duhig's understanding and expression of Christian spirituality were influenced during his student days in Rome by the Irish Redemptorist John Magnier, and by John Bosco, founder of the Salesians and who, according to Boland, was called the forerunner of Catholic Action by Pius XI.[75] Boland also records that one of Bosco's mottos which James Duhig would have found to his taste was,"Be good Christians and good citizens."[76] Coupled with a spirituality, "deeply rooted in traditional theology and devotion," Bosco had an optimism based on "the goodness of God and his providence."[77] Duhig was schooled into religious practices which, while their origins were different, nonetheless paralleled those of Protestant pietism.

Two other characteristics of Queensland Catholicism are worthy of comment. Quinn, Dunne and Duhig all supported

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[74] T.A.Warren, "Catholic rural policy in Australia," unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1955 24-25.
[75] Boland, *Duhig* 65.
[76] Boland, *Duhig* 66.
[77] Boland, *Duhig* 66.

the Catholic temperance movement.[78] During Quinn's episcopate the diocese was visited by Fr Hennebery described by McLay as, "an American missionary in the strongly revivalist style."[78] Under Quinn missions were conducted in the diocese by Hennebery, Tennison Woods and Duncan McNab.[80]

Comment will be made later about authoritarianism in the political culture of Queensland, and the manner in which the ecclesiological structures of neo-pentecostalism reinforced political authoritarianism. Such authoritarianism within the political culture may derive, in part, from episcopal authoritarianism. Quinn had founded his diocese on the Cullenite model, described as "monolithic in structure and highly efficient in operation," by McLay, "monarchical" by MacGinley, and as "authoritarian" by Byrne.[81] "The bishop decided, the priests implemented and the people obeyed," Byrne wrote, a system ratified by the 1869-70 Vatican Council.[82] While Dunne eschewed Cullenism, he and his successor Duhig, nevertheless maintained the model as ordained by the Council without some of the more "choleric", "tyrannical" and "unbending" qualities of Quinn's

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[78] McLay,"James Quinn" 155, Byrne 45, Boland, *Duhig* 67.
[78] McLay "James Quinn" 216.
[80] McLay "James Quinn" 219.
[81] McLay, *James Quinn* 47; M.E.R.MacGinley, Relationships between religious orders and the hierarchy," paper presented to the Australian Episcopal Conference, Sydney, 1980: 12, quoted Byrne 101;
[82] Byrne 101.

regime.[83] For Duhig trained in Rome in the early eighteen nineties, "his ecclesiology was an extension of his Christology."[84] Clerical authoritarianism only began to break down in the nineteen sixties under the influence of Vatican II, greater social mobility and higher levels of education among Catholics, and the increased Australianization of the hierarchy and the priesthood.

Thus, the picture to emerge from this brief survey is one in which the Catholic faithful are encouraged to better themselves through settlement on the land and to adopt the habits of personal piety and temperance; a pattern one would expect to find more readily on the Protestant side of the sectarian divide. Just as colonial South Australia was a `paradise of dissent´, so Queensland, it appears, was a`paradise of pietism´ with a rural-based trans-sectarian pietism as the formative influence on the religious culture of the colony. In colonial Queensland, distance and a lack of trained clergy among all denominations meant infrequent ministrations by clergy, with settlers either developing a greater reliance on their own spiritual resources or drifting into irreligion. Under such conditions levels of theological illiteracy were undoubtedly high, coupled with a tendency towards individualism in belief and practice. Absent from

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[83] McLay, *James Quinn* xxiii.
[84] Boland, *Duhig* 66.

the Australian frontier was the revivalism of the camp meeting which restoked the fires of fervour otherwise dampened by isolation and distance on the American frontier, so how was pietism mediated through Protestantism after John Dunmore Lang?

VI.

On the Queensland frontier, Methodism's structures may have retarded the impact of isolation, and among Irish Catholics and Lutherans - both German and Scandinavian - the cohesion provided by ethnicity may have reduced attrition also. Of all the religious denominations in colonial Queensland, Methodism held pietism as part of the evangelical inheritance it brought from Britain. Methodism grew most strongly of any denomination in colonial Queensland after Separation, increasing from 4.77% of the population in 1861 to 9.25% in 1901.[85]

Despite the influence of Lang's English dissenters, Congregationalism as a proportion of the population in Queensland was in continual decline from the earliest days of free settlement, but the prominent Queensland Congregationalist Edward Griffith was part of the evangelical establishment in Brisbane. In his biography of Edward's illustrious son, Roger Joyce writes of

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[85] Queensland Legislative Assembly, "Census of the Colony of Queensland," *Votes and Proceedings*. 2nd session session of 1862 (Vol 1) 393-445 and session of 1901 (Vol 2) 1435-1483.

Samuel's Griffith's "fundamentalist father."[86] Edward Griffith was hailed in the sectarian *Queensland Evangelical Standard,* a weekly news-magazine for which he also wrote, as "one of the foremost champions" of temperance and "in the highest rank of office bearers," of Orangemen, and seemed to spend as much time in the early eighteen eighties in Baptist pulpits as his own.[87] In the eighteen seventies and eighteen eighties, Brisbane Congregationalists supported all the evangelical causes: temperance,`social purity', the Lord's Day Observance Association, the Town and Country Mission, The British and Foreign Bible Society, the Sunday School Union, and the Orange Lodges. Politically this evangelical establishment endorsed the liberals. Joyce observed that Griffith, "partly through his father...tended to be associated with the Protestant Churches, while McIllwraith won Catholic votes."[88] In 1884 the *Standard* editorialized endorsement of Samuel Griffith's Government in words and phrases echoed a century later in the neo-pietist endorsement of the Bjelke-Petersen Government:

> We emphatically repudiate the position of a party journal, and although our political principles have been most nearly represented by the present Government, we shall not fail to condemn them if we find them trampling underfoot those laws of

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[86] Joyce 9.
[87] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 13.2.1885.
[88] R.B.Joyce, "Samuel Walker Griffith: A Liberal Lawyer," in D.J.Murphy, R.B.Joyce and M.B.Cribb, eds., *The premiers of Queensland* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1980): 164.

> righteousness which ought to govern nations as well as individuals.[88]

The writers of the *Standard* epitomized evangelical pietism in colonial Queensland. With the breaking of the drought in the summer of 1877-78, the *Standard*'s editorial covered its lack of exegesis with exhortation:

> ...when the land languished, the watercourses were dry, the cattle were perishing by the hundreds, and our hearts were sad with fear, we called upon the Lord with one consent, and He heard our prayer. He has turned the barrenness of our land into plenty, and has changed our mourning into joy. Let us not, when prosperous days return, forget God, or withhold from his cause the just tribute of our gratitude. Let us be brave and turn the abundance of the coming harvest into a reparation of the recent adversity. Let us be self-reliant and struggle through our present financial difficulties, for God helps those who help themselves.[90]

In 1885, when drought again threatened and worship services to offer prayers for rain were being organized, the *Standard* spelled out the relationship between piety and prosperity, or more specifically between poverty and impiety:

> The springs of wealth are professedly under His control, and if they be dried up, we must seek the cause not in a capricious and arbitrary will, but in the misuse of our blessings when they flowed freely.[91]

Even though it was relatively short-lived, commencing publication in July 1876 and ceasing in December 1886, the *Queensland Evangelical Standard* appeared at a

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[88] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 12.7.1884.
[90] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 30.3.1878.
[91] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 16.10.1885.

critical time and served through its inter-denominational character to maintain the ascendancy of evangelical pietism in Queensland. Joining Edward Griffith as promoters of the *Standard* were his fellow Congregationalist minister T.J.Pepper; Methodist ministers F.T.Brentnall and W.Osborne Lilley; D.F.Mitchell, minister of Park Presbyterian Church, South Brisbane from 1876 to 1908 and Presbyterian layman Gilbert Lang.

Presbyterianism in Queensland owed much more to the conservative Free Kirk traditions than to the established Church of Scotland.[92] Even though the differences inherited from Scotland after the Disruption of 1843 were put aside with the formation of a single, united Presbyterian synod in 1863, the influence of the Free Church remained strong, with the anti-Establishment Scots churchmen sending out ministers and contributing financially to the Presbyterian Church in colonial Queensland.[93] The Queensland Presbyterian Church also developed a strong relationship with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, for nearly 25 % of Presbyterian ministers in Queensland in the nineteenth century were Irish.[94] Prentis observes,"that the colonial churches

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[92] Bardon 24-5; 28.
[93] G.Balfour, *Presbyterianism in the colonies* (Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace, 1899) 169.
[94] Malcolm D.Prentis, "The Presbyterian ministry in Australia, 1822-1900: recruitment and composition," *Journal of Religious History* 13.1 (1984): 53.

tended to be conservative in doctrine and liturgy," and that the Ulster Presbyterians brought with them "a degree of evangelical warmth not generally found in the Scottish denominations."[85]

Thus, it has been suggested that during the nineteenth century in Queensland that pietistic Protestantism was ascendant.[86] While this ascendancy was short lived - and was replaced by a Catholic ascendancy during World War I - the Ryan Labor Government came to power in 1915 and Duhig succeeded Dunne in 1917 - it nonetheless was determinative of the character of the religious culture of Queensland. More importantly, however, under Dunne's influence the dual themes of piety and prosperity dominated Catholic religiosity as much as Protestant. So there was both continuity and conformity within the religious culture. Anglicanism - as will be seen in the next chapter - was more shaped by the demands of the frontier society of colonial Queensland than a force in shaping the religious culture of that society.

The alliance between Catholicism and the Labor Party saw Catholicism dominant within the religious culture for much of the period from World War I to the Labor split in

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[85] Prentis 61, 63. Educational standards of 19th century Presbyterian ministers were lower in Queensland than in Victoria and NSW. Prentis 64.

[86] Suttor suggests that the evangelical ascendancy was short lived and that secularism soon dominated. Such a view underestimates the later links between Samuel Griffith's liberals and the evangelicals. Suttor 302-3, 314.

the nineteen fifties. This period also coincides with Duhig's term in archepiscopal office. After the split, the death of Duhig and the second Vatican Council, all of which occurred in the space of ten years, neo-Protestantism in the form of the charismatic and Pentecostal movements became ascendant, making a significant impact on Catholic and Protestant churches alike, as well as exerting influence in the political arena. There was a time in the nineteen seventies when it was possible that liberal Protestantism in partnership with post-Vatican II Catholicism could have emerged to dominate the religious culture of Queensland but, for a variety of reasons including timidity by many mainstream ecclesiastical leaders in an intimidating political climate, this was never to be more than an Indian summer. We shall return to that Indian summer shortly. In the meantime it is necessary to continue our analysis of the formation of the religious culture of Queensland with an a more detailed examination of the impact of distance, and of the influence of the prevailing motif within the political culture of Queensland: development.

CHAPTER 4

DISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT: FURTHER THEMES IN THE RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL CULTURE OF A FRONTIER SOCIETY

> **A missionary's life in Queensland is but a continual pic-nic. All that is wanted is for the Queensland Churches to bestir themselves, send out men free from sanctimoniousness, men who can ride thirty miles in the saddle before breakfast, and fifty afterwards, men full of faith who preach a full salvation through Christ.**
>
> Rev W.E.Hillier 1882.[1]

I.

Colonial Queensland was a frontier society. As Glenville Pike observed,

> It was not a frontier in the geographical sense, but a frontier of settlement, in the same way it was in the United States as their pioneers spread westwards.[2]

While isolation and distance reinforced the imported pietism of the settlers, it also rendered difficult the establishment of ecclesiastical structures as they had existed in Europe, and therefore the dominant form of church polity to emerge was congregationalism. There is almost a certain inevitability that congregationalism will be the dominant form of church polity in any frontier society. Christian denominations in Australia fall under one of the three basic forms of ecclesiastical

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[1] W.E.Hillier, "Colonial mission work," *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 25.2.1882.
[2] Glenville Pike, *Queensland frontier* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1978) Foreword.

polity: episcopal, conciliar (synodical, presbyterial or connexional) and congregational. Congregationalism is a form of ecclesiastical polity in which each congregation is self governing, independent of ecclesiastical direction from beyond its bounds, and free to decide its own relationship with the church catholic.

Shortages of clergy and the huge distances involved made adoption of a conciliar system of church government in colonial Queensland exceptionally difficult for those denominations such as the churches born of the Reformation - the Presbyterians and Lutherans - for whom it was the normal form of church government, and for the Anglicans who adopted a modified form of synodical government in 1868.[3] For it was not until the eighteen sixties that attempts were made to structure denominational Christianity in Queensland. Separation from New South Wales in 1859 provided the cause for the erection of the Roman Catholic and Anglican dioceses and the appointment of bishops.

Anglicanism in nineteenth century Queensland was handicapped by several factors, of which the lack of anticipated state aid was but one. Accustomed to a special relationship with the state in England and anticipating the provision of state aid, the Church of

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[3] H.J.Richards, "Brisbane's first bishop, the Right Reverend Edward Wyndham Tufnell, MA, DD," *Queensland Heritage* 3.5 (Nov 1976): 20-21.

England found itself in a colony seemingly without borders, and a diocese whose boundaries appeared to fade into the haze.

The newly arrived bishop was no doubt disturbed by the fact that Anglican laymen in the Queensland Parliament had sided with the non-conformists and secularists in the debate over state aid.[4] Many of the immigrants who were Anglican came from "those classes with whom the Church in England had least contact."[5] Those active Anglicans who did emigrate tended to be of either evangelical or Anglo-Catholic inclination;[6] those with Broad Church sympathies were apparently inclined not to emigrate.[7]

Tufnell, was regarded as "a man of High Church conceptions"[8] while Matthew Hale (1811-1895), second Anglican bishop of Brisbane from 1875 to 1885, was regarded as being of evangelical views.[9] For decades, the Anglican diocese of Brisbane swung between evangelicalism and Anglo-Catholicism.

When Hale arrived in Brisbane at the comparatively advanced age of sixty seven to take up his episcopal duties, he nevertheless harboured a vision for evangelizing not only the Europeans of the colony, but

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[4] Rayner, "Church of England" 106.
[5] Rayner, "Church of England" 11.
[6] Rayner, "Church of England" 133.
[7] Rayner, "Church of England" 8.
[8] Suttor 311.
[9] Rayner, "Church of England" 165.

the Chinese, Melanesians and Aborigines also.[10] However, he was to be frustrated to the point of resignation by the unwillingness or inability of his constituency to provide funds for church extension let alone for mission among the non-Europeans.[11] Unlike Tufnell who was no horseman, Hale toured his diocese extensively and knew its social conditions well. He was invited to address a meeting of the Town and Country Mission, on the theme of the spiritual destitution of the bush.[12] The Town and Country Mission was a local mission society which employed an itinerant bush missionary in southern Queensland. Its promoters included Gilbert Lang and William Pettigrew, laymen associated with the *Queensland Evangelical Standard*; Edward Griffith was Treasurer.[13]

That Hale shared the common evangelical view of the relationship between piety and prosperity is clear from a sermon he preached at a Thanksgiving Service in his pro-cathedral following the breaking of the drought in 1877-78. While his exegesis was more sound that than of the editorial writers of the *Evangelical Standard* at the time, Hale nevertheless reads like an exponent of possibility thinking; a nineteenth century Norman Vincent Peale or an Antipodean Robert Schuller:

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[10] Robin 160.
[11] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 20.3.1885.
[12] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 17.2.1877.
[13] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 3.2.1877.

> When we pray to God we must do so, not only with submission and humility, but in firm faith. Our blessed Lord exemplified this when on earth...by granting prayer, when made to Him in faith."Believe ye that I am able to do all these things." "All things are possible to them that believe." "Thy faith hath saved thee."[14]

The Church of England's common cause with the evangelicals did not survive Hale's episcopate. The Anglicans did not join the Queensland Council of Churches when it was formed in 1896; the Baptists, Congregationalists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and three varieties of Methodists - Wesleyan, Primitive and United Free Methodists - did, giving the Council the character and status of an evangelical pressure group.[15] Rayner concluded that by the nineteen twenties, the Anglo-Catholic composition of Queensland Anglicanism was established, though it appears to have been a predominantly clerical movement for there was,

> a large section of the laity whom the ... clergy had not succeeded in carrying with them ...in appreciation of the Catholic heritage of the Anglican church.[16]

The "essential Catholicism," of St Clair Donaldson, Bishop of Brisbane from 1904 to 1921 was "always restrained and enriched by an evangelical simplicity and zeal."[17] Donaldson's predecessor, William Webber - Bishop of Brisbane from 1885 to 1903 - fitted well with

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[14] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 8.12.1877.
[15] Rayner, "Attitudes of the churches" 17.
[16] Rayner, "Church of England" 467.
[17] Rayner, "Church of England" 293.

the materialism of colonial Queensland. A man unconcerned with the fine points of doctrine and untroubled by intellectual doubts, he saw the spiritual expressed through the material and laboured in aid of "adequate finance, sufficient clergy and worthy church buildings," most especially St John's Cathedral.[18]

Webber railed against congregationalism within his own denomination:

> You have tried the Congregational principle long enough, and it has failed, as it ever must, as being out of harmony with the organic constitution of the Church, whatever may be the case with other bodies differently constituted. . . It was essentially Congregationalism, or rather at bottom, however unconsciously, a merely self-regarding individualism. . . which has so far hindered placing the affairs of the diocese on a sure foundation. . . So long as people talk Church principles and act Congregational principles, so long will the church fare badly; for Congregationalism is essentially self-regarding and individualist, whereas true Churchmanship is altruistic.[19]

Indeed, Rayner quotes a unknown contemporary observer as saying that after Hale's resignation the diocese, "drifted into a state of formalized congregationalism,"[20] and one wonders to what extent Hale's evangelicalism promoted such a state of affairs.

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[18] Rayner, "Church of England" 201-2.
[19] Rayner, "Church of England" 210.
[20] Rayner, "Church of England" 170.

II.

Like the Roman Catholics and the Anglicans, the Presbyterians were motivated by Separation from New South Wales to establish an ecclesiastical structure, but they struggled. Eventually a synod was formed in 1868, uniting members of several Presbyterian traditions in the process.[21] Richard Bardon wrote of the difficulties faced by the Presbyterian Church in colonial Queensland:

> ...expansion of the Church was retarded by the constitution of the Church. Presbytery [the ruling court of Presbyterianism] might be transplanted to Brisbane with little trouble, but to cause the tree to grow and to flourish in the far west, and in the distant tropics required great care and much time before the tree became accustomed to the climate.[22]

In one sense it was almost too late, for the colonists of all denominations had become accustomed to de facto congregationalism. While the Presbyterians encountered difficulty in establishing the presbytery, Tufnell encountered difficulty in establishing what he regarded as the proper and appropriate standards of worship. Tufnell had brought with him six clergy to supplement the three Anglican clergy already working in Queensland. Of the six newcomers, five were Tractarians, which caused strains between clergy and people as the newly arrived priests introduced new forms of worship and devotional practice.[23]

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[21] Bardon 30 ff.
[22] Bardon 65.
[23] Richards 18.

The autocratic Quinn found that at least one priest, McGinty in Ipswich, resented the closer episcopal oversight the accompanied the creation of the new diocese and the resultant public fracas was most unedifying.[24] In the country towns of southeastern Queensland even those who supported the bishop, such as his nephews the Horans, tended to build basilicas in their own bailiwicks which served as an assertion of localism. With Quinn's full encouragement James Horan in Warwick constructed a substantial suite of Catholic buildings.[25]

Smaller Protestant churches, like the Baptists, Churches of Christ and Brethren along with the Congregationalists themselves, have an essentially congregationalist polity with very weak links with the rest of the denomination. Methodism was a mixture of strong local autonomy, through the Leaders' Meeting and the Property Committee, and strong central authority exercised by the State Conference in matters like clergy stationing.

The Methodists, of whom there were four sects in Queensland before their union in 1898,[26] sought to erect a tin or timber chapel in every bush hamlet from Cape York to the Channel country. "The Christian principle of taking the Gospel to people wherever they

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[24] Suttor 284 ff.
[25] John O'Brien, *The bazaar gazette* (Warwick: Argus Printing Office, 1904) 3.
[26] The largest was the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The others were the Primitive Methodists, the Bible Christians and the United Free Methodists. Dingle 67 ff.

may be gathered, trusting in God alone, was consistently observed," wrote Dingle.[27] One consequence of such trust was the development of a denominational smorgasboard at which few denominations could serve their adherents with anything more than an itinerant ministry. On the southern Darling Downs, for example, there developed a tradition of Wesley-style circuit riding among the Catholic priests who rode out to say Mass in the smaller settlements and homesteads.[28]

Not all itinerant ministry was under the auspices of a recognized denomination. Hillier wrote of

> ...men calling themselves bush missionaries, who are nothing but religious adventurers, having no authority and nothing to recommend them but conceit and audacity. I followed one of these so-called bush missionaries, and found the impression made by him not calculated to arouse liberality or respect. Refusing to take the usual "nip' before retiring, he got up during the night and emptied the decanter. The poor man had been taken *ill*!
>
> Fancy people living for five and ten years in the bush without once seeing a clergyman, and then to get a man as I have described. Yet I have found more than one trying this business of religious hawking.[28]

Competition among the denominations was strong. During the eighteen seventies Frederick Richmond was an Anglican priest based at Copperfield, now a ghost town a few kilometers south west of Clermont, but then a town of

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[27] Dingle 61.
[28] N.MacQueen, *Milmerran and Cecil Plains: The Catholic story* (published by the parish, 1988) 12.
[28] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 25.2.1882.

5000 people supported by the Peak Downs Copper Mine. As Richmond told it,

> ...there were nine different denominations, each having one more minister and one or more church buildings. There were three denominations of Methodists. With difficulty the Presbyterians kept in one fold but were not harmonious, some wanted to divide to old Scottish lines. There was Church of England, Congregationalists, Baptists, Roman Catholics and Lutherans. In addition there were several congregations meeting without a minister. One body numbering only three, met regularly until two decided the third was heretical. They expelled him. Of course this "go as you please" competitive business could only be carried on by the people stinting themselves and starving their clergy and often spending the little strength left, in jealousy and bitterness with other Christians, not in nourishing true religion.[30]

While the leaders of the major denominations struggled to assert ecclesiastical discipline, among the evangelical pietists there was a more positive spirit, which, while it could not be called ecumenism, was anti-denominational in tone. The Town and Country Mission claimed to be "established on the broadest unsectarian basis; members of all Protestant denominations are on the committee."[31] The irony of claiming to be unsectarian by virtue of inclusive Protestant representation aside, the Mission forbade its agents

> to teach any denominational `ism´," saying their "sole work is to expound the Gospel and leave all points of sectarian controversy or Church government to one side.[32]

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[30] Frederick Richmond, *Queensland in the "Seventies". Reminiscences of the early days of a young clergyman* (Singapore: np., 1927) 68-69.
[31] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 11.12.1880.
[32] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 11.12.1880.

The *Queensland Evangelical Standard* actively encouraged lay initiative in organizing and conducting worship, "in the agricultural districts where no minister of the Gospel travels or where their visits are like angel's, 'few and far between'."[33] Noting that such lay leaders "may not be able to pray extempore," the *Standard* suggested that,

> The beautiful and comprehensive litany of the English Prayer Book, supplemented by a brief supplication uttered by the leader, or some printed composition, would form a fitting and most edifying vehicle for the devotions of the congregation.[34]

As for such printed compositions, the *Standard* recommended such items as the sermons it published by the British Calvinist Baptist, C.H.Spurgeon (1834-92) with the hope that,

> ...the minds of the little community would be fed with Christian knowledge, and their hearts would be purified by the sacred influences of Christian truth. The blessing it might prove on many a countryside where now the Sabbath is a day of indolence or sport, is simply incalculable.[35]

From Maren Bjelke-Petersen's recollections we know that the Danish settlers of the South Burnett followed such a model in the late nineteenth century.[36] In the lower Burnett also the Danish settlers were keen to receive devotional literature in their native language. The Town and County Mission colporteur reported, "the Danish

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[33] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 1.3.1884.
[34] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 1.3.1884.
[35] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 1.3.1884.
[36] M.Bjelke-Petersen 4-5.

residents cleared out our Bibles in their language and wanted more."[37]

The congregationalist spirit among the Queensland Lutherans was given encouragement by the wide diversity of theological backgrounds among the pastors:

> The clergy who in the early days served the German Lutherans in Queensland came from a wide variety of backgrounds, both Lutheran and Reformed, and in some cases had such little actual Lutheran background that they bolstered the ranks of other Protestant denominations. This state of affairs itself is an indication of the lack of training most of the appointed pastors had and their lack of acceptance of the need for a common basis for teaching and preaching.[38]

Such diversity also inhibited the formation of a synodical structure among the Lutherans of Queensland.

So if this is the ecclesiological tradition within which Joh Bjelke-Petersen's father, Carl, worked as a Lutheran pastor in Queensland at the turn of the century,[39] and into which Joh Bjelke-Petersen was inducted from an early age, then it should be no surprise that when faced with ecclesiastical authority in the form of archbishops and church councils during his premiership that he should be dismissive of their counsel.

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[37] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 15.10.1881.
[38] Holzknecht 172.
[39] See Chapter 6.

III.

Basic to all the difficulties faced by organized, denominational Christianity in extending its influence across the land was the sheer size of the colony, the inhospitability of the climate for much of the year, the difficulties of travelling across large tracts of the terrain, the distance between settlements and the isolation that distance engendered. It was a frontier environment. In assessing the impact of distance on the religious culture of Queensland, it is interesting to notice suggestions by several American scholars about the relationship between fundamentalism and the frontier ethos in the United States. H.Richard Niebuhr wrote that, "the conflict between urban and rural religion took on dramatic form in the theological battles of Modernism and Fundamentalism."[40]

Likewise Talcott Parsons asserted that as a relict of what he terms `old Calvinism´,

> American fundamentalism ...has been related to the frontier experience and indeed has recently been associated with parts of the country where the frontier traditions persist the most. In the South, it has been intimately associated with racial segregation and the doctrine of the inferiority of the Negro.[41]

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[40] H.Richard Niebuhr, *The social sources of denominationalism* (Cleveland: World, 1957) 184-6.
[41] Talcott Parsons, "Christianity" *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* 2:441.

However, later historians of fundamentalism have determined the movement's origins lay elsewhere. According to Sandeen:

> Fundamentalism originated in the metropolitan areas of the northeastern part of this [American] continent, and it cannot be explained as part of the Populist movement, agrarian protest, or the Southern mentality.[42]

Marsden argues that only after the Scopes trial in 1925 did fundamentalism become associated in the public mind with ruralism.[43] This point is important in the Queensland context because several scholars, notably Knight and Smith, have drawn on Niebuhr in their analyses of fundamentalist influences in the Queensland state education system.[44] What ever we make of the relationship between fundamentalism and the ethos of the frontier, it cannot be denied that physical environment influences the shape of the religious practice and polity to emerge in that environment. The situation described by Nichols in the United States does have some parallels with Queensland:

> ...people were coming over from Europe and beginning life over again and having to organize society and organize religion. The typical American frontiersman, a rugged individualist, separated from history, indifferent to tradition and conventions, contemptuous of book-learning and theory, striking

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[42] Sandeen 26.
[43] Marsden 188.
[44] Richard Smith and John Knight, "Political censorship in the teaching of social science: Queensland scenarios," *Australian Journal of Education* 25 (April 1981): 9. and Richard Smith and John Knight, "MACOS in Queensland: the politics of educational knowledge," *Australian Journal of Education* 22.3 (October 1978) 242.

> out new paths in all directions, was already visible. In many such the individualistic Christianity of the Awakening revived the dormant results of earlier religious associations. But it stamped on the revived religious life its own character.[45]

IV.

In addition to shaping religious practice and ecclesiastical polity, the physical environment also created the imperative of development. The doctrine of development - one of the cornerstones of Queensland's political culture - was not only an article of faith among politicians. Since the time of John Dunmore Lang, Catholic and Protestant alike faced with the demands of church extension across the vast distances, adopted development as their creed also. By development they did not mean simply spiritual development. For spiritual development to take place they believed the construction of church buildings was necessary also, and just as importantly for Catholics, schools needed to be built. In 1904, Duhig wrote of Quinn:

> Still greater foresight was shown by the Bishop in selecting sites for churches, schools and other Catholic institutions in the various centres of population. It is almost incredible that one man could have done so much; yet it is a fact that nowhere in Australia is the Church better provided with building sites than in Queensland.[46]

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[45] Robert H.Nichols, "The influence of the American environment on the conception of the church in American Protestantism," *Church History* XI (1942) 185-6.
[46] James Duhig, "The Right Rev Dr James O'Quinn," in O'Brien 40.

High praise from a man known as "James the Builder."

Boland wrote of Duhig at the time of his consecration as Bishop of Rockhampton in 1905:

> His piety was as pronounced as they all said it was; but he knew from the start that his life as a bishop would be inextricably tied up with banking. He saw nothing incongruous in this and never apologized for it. Many bankers came to wish it otherwise but he was a man of God who knew that he needed the men of money.[47]

The Presbyterians too knew the need for money. Bardon writes of a similar time in Presbyterian history when,

> Perhaps even more crippling than the lack of a central authority was the lack of a strong central fund. Men were sent out to take the lion's share in a great labour, and often the money in their purse was hardly enough to buy food for a canary. [48]

The Anglicans had long faced similar difficulties. Of the eighteen seventies, towards the close of Tufnell's episcopate, Rayner wrote that,

> The rate of parochial extension and the construction of buildings were barely sufficient to keep pace with the general growth in the colony...[the] twin shortages of manpower and finance were preventing the more rapid growth of the Church.[49]

As for Webber, Rayner refers to his desire to construct St John's Cathedral simply as an "obsession."[50]

It was not simply a matter of the churches crying poor, for as Crook wrote of the 1880s,

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[47] Boland, *Duhig* 86.
[48] Bardon 65.
[49] Rayner, "Church of England" 100.
[50] Rayner, "Church of England" 204.

> institutional and economic advances ...absorbed the efforts of large groups in the community [and] the materialism of a frontier and capitalist community...was one such characteristic inimical to religion.[51]

In many ways the churches were caught up in the ethos of frontier capitalism. Boland wrote of Duhig after World War I:

> He built well in the twenties. He built in bricks and mortar on a scale unprecedented; he built in "living stones making a spiritual house" 1 Peter 2:5; he built a reputation for himself and his church. [52]

For the smaller denominations - Methodists, Baptists, and Lutherans - the difficulties were even more acute especially when rent by division. Some divisions were an historical inheritance from Europe, others were indigenous. Holzknecht has counted six separate Lutheran synods operating in Australia by 1917, and at least three of these were in Queensland, resulting in, "duplication of effort, resources, church property and, of course, pastors, at a time when all these were at a premium."[53]

V.

Among the rural dwellers, especially those in the more closely settled and verdant agricultural districts of southeastern Queensland like the South Burnett, church buildings became symbols of the presence of Divine

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[51] Crook 28a.
[52] Boland, *Duhig* 224.
[53] Holzknecht 165.

Providence who would reward their labours with prosperity. For example, it was with immense pride that the Scandinavian Lutherans opened the Edenvale Lutheran Church outside present day Kingaroy in 1901.[54] Even with the passing of the pioneering years, such attitudes remained and were perpetuated by the clergy, as part of a religious ethos binding together piety, prosperity and patriotism. In this regard the attitudes and values which held sway in the South Burnett were little different from the ethos that prevailed across the state. If anything, the culture of the South Burnett epitomized that ethos.

In 1931, as the young Joh Bjelke-Petersen moved out of his teens, the Rev R.P.Pope, President of the Queensland Methodist Conference visited Kingaroy where he was welcomed by the President of the Kingaroy Ministers Fraternal, the Rev A.E.Taylor of the Anglican Church. Taylor told Pope:

> Kingaroy was advancing in its own way not because the people were helping it to go ahead, but because it was wonderful country. If it was to go ahead, it must be with Christ and his religion. If that died out the whole district would die out, because success went hand in hand with Christianity. [55]

Kingaroy Methodist minister W.F.Lawton made the connection between prosperity and faith even more explicit at the laying of the foundation stone for a new Methodist Church in Kingaroy in 1947 saying:

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[54] See Chapter 6.
[55] *KH* 31.8.1931.

> It was a day which had been awaited for a long time not only by the Methodist people, but ...also by the Kingaroy people as a whole...because ...the day marked a very definite step in the progress of the town and district. It symbolizes the dreams, ambitions and plans of the early Methodists, who had unbounded confidence in the future of Kingaroy."[56]

Duhig likewise linked piety and prosperity during a visit to Kingaroy in August 1943. Despite the exigencies of both war and drought, this prince of the church flew into the South Burnett to attend what was termed a `Princess Competition´, which seems to have been a fund-raising function in aid of St Mary´s Church in Kingaroy. Here is an excerpt from a report of his address:

> He thought it would be very difficult to stop the onwards march of Kingaroy. He remembered the place when it was a settlement of not more than a dozen houses when he came to open their first church there in 1909. He congratulated the people on the great progress the town and district had made. One thing was needed however and that was rain...and he hoped that as a blessing and reward to those little children who had carried out that competition for the honour and glory of God, that He [God] would soon send abundant rain to save the crops at Kingaroy and on the Darling Downs.[57]

Fifteen years later, Duhig´s successor, Archbishop O´Donnell, visiting Kingaroy for the confirmation of 120 candidates, exalted life on the land as a vocation second only to that of the religious life itself:

> Catholic people living on the land should think well before they adopt any idea of leaving it. He believed that next to the religious calling, life on the land is the noblest of any life, more so that

[56] *KH* 16.10.1947.
[57] *KH* 5.8.1943.

> any professional, commercial or trade sphere, because on the land people live close to nature and therefore, to God. By its very nature their wellbeing depends directly on God.[58]

O'Donnell was of course saying nothing new, but simply restating one of the articles of faith of Archbishop Robert Dunne. Such views were not only held by churchmen across the decades, but crossed sectarian boundaries as well. Similar sentiments had been expressed but a week before O'Donnell's visit to Kingaroy by the Presbyterian Church of Queensland's General Secretary, R.S.Byrnes, at the jubilee celebrations of Kingaroy Presbyterianism. "Open air life in places like Kingaroy enabled many to have a part in religion,"[59] Byrnes told the gathering of over 400 people, including the local MLA, Joh Bjelke-Petersen. Byrnes also asserted a link between the religious faith of the early settlers and the development of the district, claiming nation-building qualities for that faith, saying:

> Within the span of the last half century, the Presbyterian Church has played its part in Kingaroy's development. And throughout these years the influence of the work and faith of the pioneers of the church has been strongly in evidence. Impelled by the high Christian ideals inherent in them, these men and women established centres of worship wherever they settled - churches which stand today as monuments. They shaped, as none other, the character and destination of their nation's people.[60]

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[58] *KH* 2.10.1958.
[59] *KH* 25.9.1958.
[60] *KH* 25.9.1958.

The nation-building role of Christian faith was also the subject of exhortations by Pastor H.E.Temme at the golden jubilee celebrations of the Kumbia Evangelical Lutheran Church, outside Kingaroy, in February 1959. Temme was Principal of Concordia College, Toowoomba, and had been pastor of the Kumbia congregation from 1942 to 1948.[61] He told the Kumbia congregation that,

> ...the best contribution they could make to the welfare and advancement of our state was to do all in their power to make it a Christian state through the preaching of God's Word. Christian citizens make the most peace-loving, law-abiding, and patriotic members of the state.[62]

Built into the religious and political culture of Queensland, these three planks of piety, prosperity and patriotism became the platform on which would be erected a new edifice during the Bjelke-Petersen years: that of civil religion. But before examining the construction of this edifice, we must survey the major developments in the religious life of Queensland during the Bjelke-Petersen years.

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[61] Brauer 438.
[62] *KH* 19.2.1959.

CHAPTER 5

CATHOLICISM, ECUMENISM AND THE RISE OF NEO-PIETISM IN QUEENSLAND

The job facing church people is to get their followers back into the churches and preach the gospel to them.

Joh Bjelke-Petersen. 1985 [1]

I.

By the time Bjelke-Petersen had become, in Luther's terms, a lord if not a prince, three new religious groups had appeared in the census figures: the Orthodox, the Pentecostals and a constellation of religious groups who in Bryan Wilson's classic taxonomy of `sect' and `denomination' would be classified as `sects'. They were the Millerite groups who originated in the United States in the nineteenth century, the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Seventh Day Adventists, as well as the Christian Scientists and the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints. Table 2 sets out the proportion of adherents for the various religious groups in Queensland between 1947 and 1986.

The most enduring of the Millerite groups are the Seventh Day Adventists, who first emerged in Australia in 1885.

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[1] *CM* 17.4.1985.

TABLE 2: RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION IN QUEENSLAND 1947-1986

PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BY DENOMINATION IN CENSUS YEARS

YEAR	1947	1954	1961	1966	1971	1976	1981	1986	
DENOMINATION									
ANGLICAN	35.12	34.40	32.00	31.40	29.60	27.50	26.20	24.10	
BAPTIST	1.48	1.65	1.50	1.60	1.60	1.50	1.80	1.80	
BRETHEREN	0.20	0.31	0.30	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	
CATHOLIC	23.04	24.00	24.50	25.60	25.60	24.30	25.00	25.40	
CHRISTIAN SCI	0.10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
CHURCHES OF CHRIST	0.51	0.51	1.30	1.20	0.90	0.70	0.49	0.50	
CONGREGATIONALIST	0.77	0.68	0.60	0.80	0.50	0.40	0.20	0.20	
JEH WITNESS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.40	0.50	0.47	0.60	
LUTHERAN	1.92	2.17	2.30	2.40	2.50	2.30	1.60	1.70	
METHODIST	11.20	11.11	10.90	10.90	10.80	9.80	3.80	N/A	
ORTHODOX	N/A	0.63	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.90	0.80	1.20	
PRESBYTERIAN	10.90	11.49	11.40	11.30	10.50	8.80	5.80	4.30	
PENTECOSTAL	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.70	0.99	1.20	
SALVATION ARMY	0.51	0.54	0.60	0.50	0.60	0.50	0.56	0.60	
SDA	0.25	0.32	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.84	0.30	
UCA	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.40	9.10	
OTHER CHRISTIAN*	1.89	1.97	2.10	2.30	3.10	2.60	2.96	3.30	* FORMERLY 'OTHER PROTESTANT'
OTHER RELIGION	0.17	0.18	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.30	0.57	0.90	
UNSPECIFIED**	12.43	10.04	11.10	10.50	12.60	19.70	22.10	24.60	** INCLUDES 'NO RELIGION'
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	

Since their first appearance in the census figures in 1921, they have increased almost imperceptibly from 0.16% of the Queensland population to 0.4% in 1961 - a level they have maintained in the succeeding decades. The Jehovah's Witnesses, who first appeared in Australia in 1904, were first recorded in 1971 at approximately 0.4% of the population. This figure that increased slightly over the succeeding fifteen years. The Christian Scientists only secured one mention in the census in their own right, in 1947 when they constituted 0.1% of the population, although they had been present in Australia since 1896. The increase in these religious groups is probably a direct result of their aggressive proselytizing.

The Orthodox, by contrast have grown almost entirely through migration. Orthodox adherents, first recorded in the 1954 census, have doubled in the ensuing thirty years. In Queensland in 1981 they constituted 0.8% of the population; and in 1986, 1.2%. This is a relatively small percentage when compared to New South Wales and Victoria when they constituted 3.3% and 4.5% of the population respectively in 1981,[2] which reflects the fact that a greater percentage of post World War II migrants settled in Sydney and Melbourne.

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[2] Douglas Hynd, *Australian Christianity in outline* (Homebush West: Lancer, 1984) 23.

Pentecostals were first recorded separately in the census in 1976, with a call on 0.7% of the Queensland population. Ten years later, they represented 1.2% of the population. Much has been made, not least by the Pentecostals themselves of their growth rates.[3] On the census figures, however, the growth rate among Pentecostals is just slightly higher than the Orthodox. It is also possible that many members of the independent charismatic mega-churches who were part of the neo-pentecostal revival of the nineteen seventies and nineteen eighties did not identify themselves on the census as `Pentecostal´, and that they are recorded in the category of `Other Christian´, which since 1971, has been in the vicinity of 3% of the population. This category decreased by half a percent in 1976 when Pentecostals were first counted separately, but had recovered to gain with the addition of another 0.3% by 1981 and a further 0.3% by 1986.

Looking beyond the statistics, there were three major influences which shaped the religious culture of Queensland during the Bjelke-Petersen premiership. These were the Second Vatican Council held in Rome from 1963-65; the ecumenical movement, and in particular the formation of the Uniting Church in Australia in 1977, and thirdly, as observed above, the emergence of the neo-pentecostal movement in the early nineteen seventies. An

[3] Chant 239.

additional influence, as far as the Catholic Church was concerned, was the continuing legacy of the Australian Labor Party split in 1955. While these influences were national, and indeed international in scope, they nonetheless affected the religious culture of Queensland.

II.

The major changes brought to Australian Catholicism by Vatican II were in the areas of worship and liturgy, education and ecumenical relationships. Underneath these changes there were significant shifts in relations between clergy and laity. The laity gained an increased role in the life of the church, at the same time as the number of entrants into the priesthood and religious orders declined and the laicization of priests and religious grew.[4]

There remained some Catholics, "a minority but articulate and well organized," according to Collins[5] who remained unhappy at the changes. The critics were concerned at the changes in the liturgy, and as they perceived it, the movement away from traditional standards of doctrine and worship; and with the activities of such instrumentalities as the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace - established in 1972 but since disbanded - and

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[4] For statistical information on these changes see Hynd 21.

[5] Paul Collins, *Mixed blessings* (Ringwood: Penguin, 1986) 181.

Australian Catholic Relief (established in 1965). Both of these agencies have worked in co-operation with similar Protestant agencies, but the criticism against them was not their ecumenical connections but their perceived left-wing bias.[6]

The disruption and division occasioned in the Catholic Church by the Labor Party split engendered a note of caution in the succeeding generation of bishops. Collins, for example, was highly critical of what he terms the failure of episcopal leadership on public issues, saying, "The bishops are either unable to agree on the issues or are frightened of making a strong stand in case it may be divisive"[7] Patrick O'Farrell was even more astringent. He wrote:

> The episcopacy of the mid-1980s consisted of forgettable men, pleasant, well intentioned, eminently prayerful, but apparently bereft of dynamic or innovative spirit.[8]

The nervousness of the bishops increased following the election of Pope John Paul II, whose chosen instruments such as Cardinal Josef Ratzinger, made clear their intention to deal with some of the "excesses" of Vatican II.[9]

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[6] Edmund Campion, *Australian Catholics* (Ringwood: Viking, 1986) 246.
[7] Collins 198.
[8] O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church* 442.
[9] Collins 203.

In Queensland the majority of Cabinet members in the ruling ALP were Santamaria supporters at the time of the Labor split in the fifties.[10] Along with Victoria, Queensland consistently offered the strongest support to the Democratic Labor Party (DLP) for more than two decades after the ALP split. The DLP was formed from the Queensland Labor Party, a by-product of the Labor split in Queensland. Thus the major Catholic dissidents have been members of Santamaria's National Civic Council - who very rarely make public statements - and Catholics United for the Faith, a group linked through its chief spokesman George Cook to the Festival of Light. For example, in 1987 Catholics United for the Faith made allegations against the orthodoxy of Fr Bill O'Shea, a priest of the Brisbane Archdiocese who contributed a regular advice column on faith, moral and social issues to Brisbane's *Catholic Leader* newspaper.[11]

The end of Australian Catholicism as a monolithic social and religious force was hastened by Vatican II; but was the leadership demoralized and the church paralyzed in the process? O'Farrell offers this summary of Australian Catholicism in the mid nineteen eighties:

> Twenty years after the end of the second Vatican Council, thirty years after the ALP split, the Australian Catholic Church remains in a kind of suspended animation. Its daily work of prayer, sacraments, charity and

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[10] Political Chronicle, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 1.1 (Nov 1955): 113.
[11] *The Catholic Leader*, 2.8.1987.

> teaching proceed, but no longer in the atmosphere of certain security that pervaded its old world. The coincidence of the profound challenges of the Vatican Council with a set of major identity crises in its own affairs - about politics, social involvement, education upward socio-economic mobility - has generated a form of near paralysis. The collapse of confidence and will has been so complete, so total - no mere hiatus, or temporary faltering - as to call into question the recuperative vitality of a body laid low by the challenges of change.[12]

III.

Yet despite O'Farrell's pessimism, one of the major changes wrought by Vatican II was in ecumenical relationships between the churches. Vatican II meant that ecumenism was no longer a Protestant preserve. Australian Protestants had of course been involved in ecumenical engagement since the turn of the century, when the Presbyterian Church of Australia at its inaugural Assembly in 1901 proposed the formation of a United Evangelical Church in Australia.[13] One result of the organic union between the Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian churches into the Uniting Church in Australia in 1977 was that the `non-conformist conscience' had a stronger voice; a voice that in Queensland took little time to be raised in ire against Bjelke-Petersen and his government.

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[12] O'Farrell *The Catholic Church* 447.
[13] see J.Harrison, *Baptism of fire* (Melbourne: Uniting Church Press, 1986) 16 ff. for details on the church union negotiations.

Another result in Queensland of the church union process was that it created four denominations where previously there had only been three. Not only were small splinter groups of Congregationalists and Methodists formed, but some 46% of Presbyterian communicant members opted to stay out of the Uniting Church.[14] The only state with a higher percentage of continuing Presbyterian congregations was New South Wales with 54% of communicant members remaining Presbyterian. Sociologist Alan Black and others suggest that those deciding to continue in the Presbyterian Church were more conservative theologically and politically than those uniting.[15] If this is the case - and Hynd suggests that it is not the case in New South Wales[16]- then among the three pre-union denominations there were a greater number of conservative members than in any other state with the possible exception of New South Wales.

The ecumenical movement brought about a range of joint initiatives by the Catholic Church and the major Protestant denominations particularly in the areas of social justice and theological education for clergy and among the laity. For example in the mid nineteen eighties

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[14] Harrison *Baptism* 21.
[15] Alan Black, "The sociology of ecumenism: initial observations on the formation of the Uniting Church in Australia," in A.W.Black and P.Glasner, *Practice & belief. Studies in the sociology of Australian religion*, (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1983) 105, and Hans Mol, *The faith of Australians* 32.
[16] Hynd 30.

groups of Catholic, Anglican and Uniting Church lay people at parish level across Queensland studied the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Paper no 111 entitled *Baptism, eucharist and ministry*,[17] a document which presaged a new world-wide ecumenical convergence particularly on baptism and the eucharist. Another national ecumenical initiative in the area of social justice, Action for World Development, became a trenchant critic of the policies of the Bjelke-Petersen government. Paul Collins concludes:

> Ecumenism and common theological and scriptural study have broken down the old divisions between Catholic and Protestant. New groupings are emerging: one group comprises liberal and and mainline Catholics and Protestants who are committed to social justice and an inclusive understanding of the Church; the other group comprises conservative Catholics and evangelical Protestants committed to personal piety, fundamentalist theology and to an exclusive conception of the Church.[18]

IV.

One group which Collins would place in his second category were the Pentecostals. Historically, Pentecostalism is the Christianity's fourth major tradition after Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Protestantism. The manifestation of classical pentecostal phenomena such as glossolalia (speaking in tongues) at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angles, California, in 1906 is generally

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[17] World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission, *Baptism, eucharist and ministry*, Faith and Order Paper no 111 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982.)

[18] Collins 210.

regarded as the genesis of modern Pentecostalism.[18] Pentecostalism is characterized by ecstatic experiences, such as glossolalia and supernatural healing. Furthermore, pentecostal worship is far less formal than traditional Christian worship. Pentecostal congregations tend to have strong, even authoritarian, internal leadership structures, but are also strong on local autonomy. Links to the denomination, where this exists, are weak. Indeed, Pentecostalism also has a tendency to be schismatic.

Scholars have posited what is known as the `deprivation theory' to account for the popularity of exotic and ecstatic religious experiences such as those found in pentecostal churches. The Pentecostals are one group whom, it is suggested, are deprived or dispossessed, and who seek release from that deprivation and dispossession through their religious experiences. Yet much of this research applies to blacks or poor whites in the American South, and the deprivation theory has much less application to neo-pentecostalism.[20]

Neo-pentecostalism, often termed `the charismatic renewal movement',[21] emerged around 1970 in the United States.

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[18] C.M.Roebuck, *Pentecostal/Charismatic literature: A survey of the past ten years*, Zadok Centre Reading Guide no R22, (Canberra: Zadok Centre, 1984.)
[20] Richard Quebedeaux, *The new Charismatics. The origins, development, and significance of Neo-pentecostalism* (New York: Doubleday, 1976) 5.
[21] Church of England in Australia, Diocese of Sydney, *Both sides of the question: official enquiry into Neo-*

A world wide phenomenon, it revived the major Pentecostal denomination, the Assemblies of God, spawned thousands of new independent pentecostal churches, and spread classical pentecostal beliefs and practices through Catholic and Protestant churches world wide. The term 'pentecostal' has been used to describe groups, practices and events associated with classical Pentecostalism predating the charismatic renewal movement of the nineteen seventies. The term neo-pentecostalism has been used to describe the contemporary manifestations of revived pentecostalism, particularly the new independent charismatic and Pentecostal churches, and the charismatic renewal movement within existing denominations. The distinction is somewhat arbitrary, and is used mainly to distinguish the two historical phases of the movement.[22]

Although neo-pentecostalism has attracted substantial media attention, particularly from television,[23] very little scholarly attention has been paid to either classical Pentecostalism or neo-pentecostalism in Australia. Mason's bibliography of religion in Australian

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Pentecostalism, (Sydney: Anglican Information Office, 1973.)

[22] Barry Chant, "The promise of the charismatic movement," in D.Harris, D.Hynd & D.Millikan, *The shape of belief. Christianity in Australia today* (Homebush West: Lancer, 1982) 110.

[23] For example *7.30 Report,* 15.6.1987.

life, published in 1982 contained only three items on Pentecostalism or charismatic renewal in Australia.[24]

The most substantial Pentecostal denomination in Australia is the Assemblies of God. Its origins lie among a disparate group of independent Pentecostal congregations formed in Victoria in the early part of the twentieth century.[25] In 1937, the organization which had previously been known as the Pentecostal Church of Australia since 1925, officially adopted the name Assemblies of God. In that year there were some twenty congregations. By 1984 the number had increased to 356, (encompassing some 45,000 members) with the fastest growth between 1974 and 1984 when 226 new congregations were formed.[26] Chant cites the national census figures to establish a growth rate of 87.92% for Pentecostals in the five years from 1976 to 1981. The next largest increase was among Baptists with a 9.25% increase.[27]

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[24] M.Mason, ed., *Religion in Australian life. A bibliography of social research* (Adelaide: Australian Association for the Study of Religion & National Catholic Research Council, 1982) 107. Melvin C. Williams, "Neo-pentecostalism in Australia. A sociological investigation of the Charismatic Movement and its effects upon the Established Churches in Queensland," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Queensland, 1977 examines the Christian Life Centre, St Luke's Presbyterian Church, Wavell Heights and the Catholic charismatic movement in Brisbane. Much of the research predates the emergence of the neo-pentecostal mega-churches.
[25] Barry Chant, "Pentecostals," in Ian Gillman, (ed) *Many Faiths, One Nation* (Sydney: Collins, 1988) 278.
[26] Chant, *Heart* 144.
[27] Chant, *Heart* 224.

In Queensland, by 1930, some nine congregations had grouped themselves together under the banner of the Assemblies of God. In addition to the Brisbane assembly, Chant records there were congregations in Ayr, Bundaberg, Mackay, Maryborough, Ravensbourne (east of Toowoomba), Rockhampton, Toowoomba, and Townsville.[28] The beginnings of the Assemblies of God in Brisbane are unclear. Chant's first mention of Brisbane refers to the visit to the city in 1922 of Janet Lancaster, one of the Melbourne founders of Pentecostalism, during which, "about a dozen people were converted, a few people claimed healing and some were baptized".[28] The Assemblies of God made little impact on the religious culture of Queensland until the nineteen seventies.

As neo-pentecostalism developed, the Mt Gravatt Assemblies of God, also known as the Garden City Christian Church, emerged as one the most powerful and influential of the neo-pentecostal mega-churches. Its rise to influence began in 1968, the same year that Bjelke-Petersen assumed the premiership of Queensland, when Reginald Klimionok became its pastor. At that time the congregation was less than 100 members. At the height of its influence in the early and mid nineteen eighties over 2000 people attended worship on Sundays, and the church had an extensive program including publications,

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[28] Chant, *Heart* 130.
[28] Chant, *Heart* 72.

counselling, and an onsite ministry training college.[30] However, in November 1988 Klimionok resigned in the wake of allegations that he had misspent church funds.[31] In the second decade of Klimionok's pastorate the church became closely identified with Bjelke-Petersen and the ruling National Party government in a variety of ways. This relationship between Bjelke-Petersen and neo-pentecostalism is discussed more fully in Chapters 18 and 19.

The other neo-pentecostal group to impact significantly on the religious culture of Queensland was the Christian Outreach Centre (COC), founded in 1974 by Clark Taylor. Taylor was originally a probationer in the Methodist Church,[32] but spent several years as an associate to Pastor Trevor Chandler at the Christian Life Centre,[33] an independent offshoot of a small Pentecostal denomination known as the Full Gospel Church,[34] before forming his own church. From its inception in a suburban lounge room in Brisbane, COC spread to take on the characteristics of a denomination. In its first decade - 1974 to 1984 - over 50 COC congregations were established throughout Australia and the organization promoted itself aggressively under the slogan "Australia for Christ".

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[30] Chant, *Heart* 145.
[31] *CM* 28.11.1988; 17.8.1988; 6.7.1988.
[32] *Telegraph*, 23.4.1987.
[33] Chant, *Heart* 226.
[34] Chant, *Heart* 214.

The Christian Outreach Centre is based at Wecker Road, in the Brisbane suburb of Mansfield, and the complex includes a school and tertiary college along with a 5000 seat auditorium. Like the nearby Garden City Christian Church, COC developed close links with Bjelke-Petersen and his government. A flamboyant character, Taylor's approach included the full panoply of pentecostal practices: speaking in tongues, healing and baptism by immersion. But his style was not necessarily appreciated by Pentecostals of the old school. Chant, himself a leader in the charismatic renewal movement observed, "Not everyone liked Taylor's approach, and some of the established Pentecostals found it hard to accommodate."[35] Taylor resigned in 1990 after admitting that he had conducted extra-marital affairs with female members of his church in 1979 and 1988.[36]

Not only were there differences between Taylor and the old guard of Pentecostalism. There was also ill-will between the neo-pentecostal churches and the established mainline churches. One of the causes is the suggestion that members of the new charismatic congregations are disenchanted mainliners. The suggestion is rebutted by Chant[37] - who is essentially an apologist for Pentecostalism - but it is a proposition given credence

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[35] Chant, *Heart* 227.
[36] *CM*, 9.4.1990; 12.4.1990.
[37] Chant, *Shape of Belief* 113.

by Taylor[38] as well by Anglican sociologist Bishop Bruce Wilson.[38] But the antipathy runs deeper than than alleged sheep-stealing. For decades Pentecostalism was the poor relation of Australian Christianity. As Barry Chant observes:

> Pentecostals were a despised minority, generally lumped together with Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses and other unorthodox groups as being heretical and essentially non-Christian. For many years small Pentecostal congregations struggled on in dingy halls or secondhand churches, their pastors under-trained and under-paid, despised by the world and ignored by the church. At best they were regarded as a deviation to be patiently tolerated; at worst as a demonic delusion.[40]

However, little sociological research has been undertaken on either Pentecostalism and neo-pentecostalism in Australia. Some basic research undertaken by Kaldor on neo-pentecostals in Sydney shows they are likely to be younger, less educated, and are more likely to be separated or divorced than the average churchgoer. Kaldor estimates that about one third of those attending neo-pentecostal churches, "have come without previous active church involvement".[41] Conversely, Williams observed in the mid-nineteen seventies that a number of former Pentecostals became communicant members of St Luke's Presbyterian Church, Wavell Heights, then a centre of

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[38] *Telegraph*, 23.4.1987.
[38] Bruce Wilson, "A sociologist's impressionistic views of the Charismatic movement in Australia," *St Mark's Review*, (September 1978) 25.
[40] Chant, *Shape of belief* 111-112.
[41] Peter Kaldor, "Charting the church in a changing landscape," *Journey* (April 1988): 10.

strong charismatic renewal. He attributes this to an "upward social status movement" similar to that documented in the United States.[42] However, this was before the Christian Outreach Centre and Garden City Christian Church had begun to have any significant impact on the public profile of Pentecostalism.

In terms of personality types, Pentecostals seem to be people more perplexed by the complexity of contemporary life than the average church-goer, and who seek simple solutions to their own personal problems and those of the community.[43] Clark Taylor of COC cited the simplicity of faith presented by his church as one of its attractive features.[44]

Part of that simplicity applies to the Pentecostal and neo-pentecostal approach to the Bible. Classical Pentecostalism in Queensland was both sectarian and fundamentalist. In June 1974, Queensland Assemblies of God leader Harold Bartholomew wrote of a trip to northern Queensland:

> Roman Catholics who have been born again and baptized in the Holy Ghost are learning the value of the Bible...Sampling the views of inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures in some denominations, we need to know what we believe and why regarding its inspiration and authority that we might stand like a rock.[45]

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[42] Williams 79.
[43] Kaldor 10.
[44] *Telegraph* 23.4.1987.
[45] Assemblies of God, Queensland Fellowship, *News Digest* June 1974.

In an interview with the *Catholic Leader* some ten years later Klimionok expressed a slightly more moderate view saying, "Certainly we are closer to Catholics in relation to the Bible than we are to the liberal Protestant stream,"[46] a view which also contains an acceptance of Catholicism not evident in Bartholomew's statement.

V.

In addition to the Assemblies of God denomination and the Christian Outreach Centre there are a number of other independent neo-pentecostal mega-churches in Brisbane of substantial size. Chant estimated in 1984, that of the 264 recognized Pentecostal and neo-pentecostal pastors in Queensland - of whom 114 were Assemblies of God and 36 were COC, that there were at least 15 independent neo-pentecostal pastors registered as marriage celebrants.[47] The congregations they served include the Christian Life Centre in Fortitude Valley, Brisbane Christian Fellowship, based at Enoggera, and the Christian Revival Crusade at Camp Hill. While their leadership and members may have shared the political convictions of Garden City and COC, the involvement these congregations in the political process has been less overt.

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[46] *Catholic Leader* 15.9.1985.
[47] Chant, *Heart* 222.

Two other significant para-church Pentecostal organizations are headquartered in Queensland. They are the Full Gospel Christian Businessmen's Fellowship (FGBFI) and the Logos Foundation. The Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship is an American organization first established in Australia in 1960. By 1984, there were 68 chapters around Australia.[48] The Logos Foundation which is both a religious and a political organization describing itself as, "reformed... baptistic... evangelical... and charismatic,"[48] moved its operations from the Blue Mountains west on Sydney at the end of 1987 to Toowoomba on the Darling Downs. The motivations and operations of the Logos Foundation in Queensland are also dealt with more fully in Chapter 18.

While neo-pentecostal mega-churches on the scale of Garden City Christian Church exist in other metropolitan cities, for example the Brookvale Christian Church on Sydney's North Shore, the fact that COC, possibly the most aggressive charismatic group in Australia, is indigenous to Queensland, and that FGBFI and now the Logos Foundation are both headquartered in Queensland has significance for the religious culture of Queensland. Moreover in 1984, of the 320 recognized Assemblies of God ministers in Australia, 114 or 35% were in Queensland,

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[48] Chant, *Heart* 232.
[48] Logos Foundation, "An open letter from Howard Carter", September 1987.

the largest number of any state.[50] The national headquarters of the Assemblies of God denomination was located in Brisbane, and its national clergy training institution, the Commonwealth Bible College was also located in Brisbane for many years prior to its reestablishment at Katoomba in the Blue Mountains in 1984. This preponderance of Pentecostal activity indicates a receptivity to pentecostal and charismatic beliefs and practices within the religious culture of Queensland unmatched in other states. Certainly Queensland showed, along with South Australia and the Northern Territory, the strongest growth in Pentecostalism between the 1976 and 1981 censuses; an increase from 0.7% of the population to 1.05% of the population. Queensland also had the largest percentage of the population identifying themselves as Pentecostal: 1.05% of the population in 1981. Nationally, only 0.49% of the population identified themselves as Pentecostal in 1981[51] While the figures are only small percentages, the degree of nominalism expected among Pentecostals is very low. Thus when the Pentecostals chose to become involved in politics, their influence was out of all proportion to their numbers in the census.

When considering the political impact of neo-pentecostalism, some assessment should be made its impact

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[50] Chant, *Heart* 222.
[51] Chant, *Heart* 224.

on the existing denominations. In Queensland the Catholics charismatic renewal movement focused around the Bardon Catholic Church, and a lay organization known as the Emmanuel Covenant Community.[52] It was strongly influenced by the originators of the Catholic charismatic movement in Ann Arbor, Michigan and never developed the separatist tendencies which sometimes characterized charismatic groups within the Protestant churches.[53] Internationally the Catholic Church developed structures for relating the renewal movement to the on-going life of the church, and in Brisbane, Archbishop Francis Rush gave the charismatic Catholics both support and oversight.[54]

Similarly within Anglicanism, the movement was under episcopal guidance with the Assistant Bishop of Brisbane Rt Rev R.E.Wicks becoming an active participant in charismatic renewal after what he regarded as supernatural healing of a heart condition. In the Anglican Diocese of North Queensland, Bishop John Lewis encouraged charismatic renewal in his parishes.[55] The Presbyterian Church of Queensland made a review of the charismatic movement in 1972 which, while not condemnatory of the movement, warned of several dangers it posed,[56] after St Luke's Presbyterian Church at

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[52] Stuart Cunningham and John Harrison,"The Catholic Charismatic movement in Brisbane," *On Being* (December 1976-January 1977) 43-48.
[53] Williams 28-9
[54] Cunningham and Harrison 45.
[55] Williams 98.
[56] Williams 151.

Wavell Heights became the epicentre of charismatic renewal in that denomination in the early nineteen seventies. The influence of the charismatic movement in the Presbyterian Church did not survive church union. Shortly after church union the key figures at St Luke's moved to the independent neo-pentecostal group, Brisbane Christian Family at Enoggera.

Williams also reported strong support for the charismatic renewal movement in the Queensland Methodist Church through influential figures in the Department of Christian Education of the connexional office.[57] Much of that influence transferred across into the Uniting Church. The influence of the charismatic renewal movement in the Uniting Church became widespread, and indeed the cause of not inconsiderable conflict within the Uniting Church in the nineteen eighties. Entire congregations at Mt Louisa (Praise Chapel) and Hermit Park (Vision Chapel) in Townsville adopted a neo-pentecostal *modus operandi*. In south-eastern Queensland, Kangaroo Point and Chapel Hill congregations in Brisbane, Logan parish in Logan City, Elanora parish on the Gold Coast, Rangeville parish in Toowoomba, South-east Ipswich and Trinity parishes in Ipswich, Maroochy and Caloundra parishes on the Sunshine Coast were all centres of strong charismatic influence. No major urban centre in south-eastern Queensland was without a centre of charismatic influence. By 1986 the

[57] Williams 100.

Uniting Church synod elected a prominent leader in the charismatic movement, Rev R.L.Thompson, as its moderator. Thompson and two other Uniting Church clergymen who were leaders in the charismatic movement, C.L.Warren and J.D.Frewen-Lord, were all supporters of the Logos Foundation, a measure of the manner in which the charismatic renewal movement brought with it more conservative political attitudes.

Political scientist R.K.D.Smith surveyed nine Protestant congregations in 1980 in an exploration of the link between political conservatism and church-going, concluding that in the congregations he surveyed, there was no link.[58] Two observations need to be made about Smith's work. While Smith chose his congregations at random, his sample was too small to be representative. Secondly, his work may well have been to early to identify the influence of neo-pentecostalism on the congregations he surveyed. A survey five years later may well have produced a different result.

The rise of neo-pentecostalism and the spread of its influence in the form of charismatic renewal through all the major denominations; the greater theological conservatism of post-union Presbyterianism; the increased activity and acceptance of politico-religious groups like

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[58] R.K.D.Smith, "Protestant church-going and political behaviour," unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis University of Queensland 1981: 45.

Rona Joyner's Society To Outlaw Pornography and Campaign Against Regressive Education in the nineteen seventies and the Logos Foundation in the nineteen eighties are manifestations of neo-pietism which, while fertilized by developments in conservative American Christianity, was nonetheless grafted into the strong traditions of pietism pre-existing in the religious culture of Queensland.

Structural changes absorbed the energies of the major denominations in the nineteen sixties and nineteen seventies; Vatican II for the Catholics; constitutional and then liturgical reform for the Anglicans; church union for the Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists as well as the Lutherans. In addition to this, improved standards of clerical education in the mainline denominations,[58] along with what has been termed a collective identity crisis among clergy in the face of the increased availability of professional counselling services,[60] focused the attention of the

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[58] The lack of general educational opportunities had long been a problem in Queensland, made so by the deliberate policy of successive Labor Governments until 1957. See Rupert Goodman, *Secondary education in Queensland* (Canberra: ANU Press, 1968). In relation to theological education, Prentis holds that Presbyterian clergy in Queensland were less well educated than those of NSW and Victoria. Prentis 64. In 1968 the Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches formed a Joint Faculty of Theology in Queensland, and in 1983 the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Uniting Churches formed an ecumenical consortium, the Brisbane College of Theology for the purposes of theological education.

[60] Norman Blaikie, *The plight of the Australian clergy: to convert, care or challenge* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1979) and Kenneth Dempsey, *Conflict and*

clergy away from the pietism so deeply ingrained into the religious culture of Queensland. Into this void caused by conciliar inattention and clerical identity crisis flowed neo-pentecostalism.

From a review of the world-wide origins of neo-pentecostalism, and the reaction among classical Pentecostals to neo-pentecostalism, it is obvious that both pietism and revivalism - the progenitors of fundamentalism - were the seed beds of neo-pentecostalism.[61] Moreover in Queensland, the traditional repositories of evangelical pietism, Methodism and Presbyterianism, also provided several of the key leaders of neo-pentecostalism: Clark Taylor from Methodism, and Alec Wylie and Ian Barlow from Presbyterianism. Wylie, a former moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, and Barlow were instrumental in the establishment of the Brisbane Christian Fellowship (BCF) a large city-wide independent neo-pentecostal congregation. New Zealand also provided Queensland with several significant leaders of neo-pietism: Pastor Trevor Chandler at CLC, Pastor Vic Hall at BCF and Howard Carter of the Logos Foundation.

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decline. Ministers and laymen in an Australian country town (North Ryde: Methuen, 1983.)

[61] Quebedeaux 174 and Walter Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals. The Charismatic Movement in the churches* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972) 21.

VI.

Neo-pentecostalism also brought to the surface an aspect of Protestant theology which had previously had little influence on the religious culture of Queensland: `prosperity theology´. Briefly stated, prosperity theology is founded on a dualistic view of life and the universe. Illness, bad fortune, mismanagement in one´s personal life or business are caused by human sin and demonic forces - very much an Old Testament view of the world. On the other hand obedience to and trust in God will bring health and material prosperity.

Such a doctrine is not indigenous to Australia, but has its antecedent in `the gospel of wealth´, a century old heterodoxy from the American Protestant tradition. With the rise of *laissez-faire* economics in the nineteenth century it was, as Hudson says, "but a small step for current principles of economics to be translated into laws of God´s providential ordering of society."[62] The publication in 1889 of an essay on wealth by capitalist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) saw a rush of clerical advocates of the gospel of wealth.

In his essay Carnegie argued that,

> The highest life is probably to be reached, not in the imitation of the life of Christ as Count Tolstoi gives us, but while animated by Christ´s spirit, by recognizing the changed conditions of this age, and adopting modes of expressing this spirit suitable to

[62] Hudson 305.

> the changed conditions under which we live, still labouring for the good of our fellows, which was the essence of his life and teaching, but labouring in a different manner.[63]

For Carnegie, to labour in a different manner meant that those with the ability should acquire wealth, but distribute it through philanthropy. Thus,

> The laws of accumulation will be left free. Individualism will continue, but the millionaire will be but a trustee for the poor; intrusted for a season with a great part of the increased wealth of the community, but administering it for the community far better than it could or would have done itself.[64]

Carnegie had, in the words of Ralph Gabriel,

> formulated a folk philosophy...accepted by the farmers who joined the Grange and by the more able and ambitious laboring men who looked forward to individual advancement to the status of property owners.[65]

The most prominent ecclesiastical proponents of Carnegie's ideas were the Philadelphia Baptist minister Russell Conwell - the author of *Acres of Diamonds* and founder of Temple University - and William Lawrence, episcopal bishop of Massachusetts. In his 1901 essay on "The Relation of Wealth to Morals," Lawrence wrote:

> We believe in the harmony of God's universe... Only by working along the lines of right thinking and right living can the secrets and wealth of Nature be

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[63] Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth" in Gail Kennedy, ed., *Democracy and the gospel of wealth* (Boston: D.C.Heath, 1949) 6.
[64] Kennedy 8.
[65] R.H.Gabriel, *The course of American democratic thought. An intellectual history since 1815* (New York: Ronald, 1940) 146-7.

> revealed. We like the Psalmist, occasionally see the wicked prosper, but only occasionally...
>
> Put the thousand immoral men to live and work in one fertile valley and then thousand moral men to live and work in the next valley, and the question is soon answered as to who wins the material wealth. Godliness is in league with riches.[66]

The principles espoused by Carnegie, Conwell and Lawrence found their way into the Protestant and Pentecostal traditions, especially the latter where religion became a significant agent of social mobility. In Gabriel's view, the gospel of wealth "became a formula which permitted the Church to make peace with popular materialism," amid the prosperity of post-Civil War America.[67]

Prosperity theology travelled the Pacific in the baggage of the American Pentecostal preachers, such as Aimee Semple McPherson and Oral Roberts who helped sustain the movement in the first half century of its existence in Australia. Garden City Christian Church's Reginald Klimionok - the son of a Pentecostal pastor and trained himself as an Assemblies of God pastor - was steeped in classical Pentecostalism and this is how he described what we have termed prosperity theology in 1983:

> ...Part of our heritage as children of God is our right to be prosperous in God...
> There is a difference between the doctrines of prosperity and the doctrine of materialism...
> Although the Bible teaches us, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth....but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21), it

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[66] William Lawrence, "The relation of wealth to morals," in Kennedy 69.
[67] Gabriel 157.

> does not suggest that we cannot lay up treasures for God's Kingdom and eternal purposes.[68]

Subsequently, Klimionok made explicit what he understands to be the relationship between prosperity and faithfulness and obedience to God:

> ...we can expect God to prosper us, but only for the purpose of doing His will. The tragedy is that some of the teaching on prosperity does not take this into account and it becomes more of a materialistic thing...
>
> Indeed everything God gives us is given for His honour and for His glory. The criteria...is (sic) the will of God, and our submission to His will. In this context when God prospers us we should recognize that it is for the Kingdom and Glory of God.[69]

While prosperity theology is at odds with the traditions of self-denial and asceticism which run strongly through both Catholicism and classical Protestantism, the pulpit oratory of prosperity theology fits well with the political rhetoric of 'development'. Development was one of the key themes not only of the Bjelke-Petersen regime, but of the political culture of Queensland, and was a substantial element in the alliance formed between the National Party and the neo-pentecostals in the nineteen eighties.

In some ways Vatican II, the ecumenical movement and the new theology symbolized by the radicalization of Christian approaches to social justice were to the

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[68] Reginald Klimionok, *God sent his angel* (Brisbane: Vision Enterprises, 1983) 114-115.
[69] Klimionok 215-216.

religious culture of Queensland in the second half of the twentieth century what higher criticism and liberal theology were in the late nineteenth century. The new approaches to social justice owed their origin to a diversity of sources: the experience of the church under Nazism in Germany between 1933 and 1945; the example of Martin Luther King and the American blacks as well as to `liberation theology´ as developed in South America. Some of it was evangelical in origin, deriving from the diversification of evangelical thought in the United States that arose in large measure as a result of the Vietnam War. For some of the faithful, the shock of the new was as great in the twentieth century as it was in the nineteenth, giving rise as Paul Collins observes, to a great divide in religion between `conservative´ and `liberal´, however much one may eschew the terms. As the Bjelke-Petersen premiership progressed this divide was to become a barrier with Bjelke-Petersen and the neo-pietist `conservatives´ ranged on one side, and the `liberals´, representing the leadership of the mainline churches, and a number of ecumenical groups representative of the `new theology´ ranged on the other.[70] How did Bjelke-Petersen come to be on the `conservative´ side of the divide? What was his formative experience of Christianity, and how did that experience contribute to his political philosophy?

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[70] Collins 210.

PART II.

FROM POOR BUT PIOUS FARM BOY TO PREMIER

CHAPTER 6.

RETURN TO EDENVALE

> I think of my grandparents ... and others of whom my parents have told me, of their courage and what they endured, so that we of today are able to enjoy life in such ideal and happy surroundings. After all, this South Burnett district is one of which we can all be justly proud and our sincere thanks are due to all those early men and women who came into this dense scrub area and prepared the way for us of today. They not only left us the heritage of rich open countryside, but ... they found time to erect churches in which they could worship. Theirs was indeed a life of courage and faith in God.
>
> Joh Bjelke Petersen, 1956.[1]

I.

In 1913, Joh Bjelke-Petersen's parents, George Carl Bjelke-Petersen[2] and his wife Maren returned from New Zealand to settle on the rich and fertile acres of Queensland's South Burnett district. It was in the South Burnett that Carl and Maren had first met; she was a daughter of local settlers and he had been an itinerant Lutheran pastor. With the returning Bjelke-Petersens were New Zealand-born Johannes, aged two, and Joh's older brother Christian, born in 1907. The couple's third child, Neta, was born in April 1914.

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[1] *KH* 5.7.1956.

[2] George Carl Bjelke-Petersen was known in the Bjelke-Petersen family as Carl.

Maren's parents had been among the first agriculturalists to settle in the district in 1894 after their arrival from Denmark. Between 1896 and 1903 Carl Bjelke-Petersen was Lutheran pastor to the Danish settlers in Queensland, and in 1901, he dedicated the first place of worship in the district, the Edenvale Lutheran Church, spiritual home to the one Swedish and twenty-two Danish Lutheran families who formed the congregation. So in 1913, the Bjelke-Petersens were not only returning to the links of family and land in the South Burnett, but were returning also to Edenvale, a sorely needed symbol of faith and hope after their New Zealand sojourn.

Carl Bjelke-Petersen's health had broken down while serving as a Lutheran pastor in New Zealand amongst the large Scandinavian immigrant community there,[3] and he had taken up farming in New Zealand - with limited success - for approximately seven years before returning to Queensland. Each parent had their respective spheres of influence on the life and character and spiritual development of Johannes. "More than anything," Joh Bjelke-Petersen wrote in his memoirs, "I am in debt to my father for making me realize there is a spiritual side to life."[4]

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[3] L.Hoey, "Joh as a leader. A personal view from his cousin," *New Leaves* 10 (April 1987) 11.
[4] J.Bjelke-Petersen, *Don't you worry about that. The Joh Bjelke-Petersen memoirs* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1990) 11.

Born in 1870, Carl Bjelke-Petersen came to Australia with his family in 1891. Having studied in Denmark and Germany, and fluent in five languages, he joined the staff of Scots College, Hobart for a brief period.

In 1893 he expressed a desire to teach among the Scandinavian immigrants in New Zealand, but was advised that there was a greater need for Lutheran pastors. Recognizing his study at the University of Heidelberg - which apparently included some work in divinity - as a form of pre-service theological education, the church indicated that it would place him under the supervision of an experienced pastor for a period prior to ordination. Lyng's study of the Scandinavian immigration in New Zealand indicates that one of the major church agencies was a Danish Home Mission Society which espoused a strict and theologically conservative line.[65] As the Society was the major mission agency active among the Danes in New Zealand it is most likely that its influence was exerted upon Carl Bjelke-Petersen. Carl was ordained in 1894 after a brief ten month apprenticeship.

But how much theological understanding did he have, and of what kind? He was certainly a gifted linguist and had, according to Lunn, studied in Europe until age twenty-two[66] but his preparation for ordination was

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[65] J.S.Lyng, *The Scandinavians in Australia, New Zealand and the Western Pacific* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1939)179-180.
[66] Lunn *Joh* 14.

exceptionally short, even by late nineteenth century standards.

Church of England clergy of that time, even those serving in the colonies, were generally required to have a degree from Oxford or Cambridge before proceeding to ordination. Indeed, this practice made the task of finding clergy willing to give up the comforts of nineteenth century English curacies most onerous on successive bishops of Brisbane. In colonial Queensland, pastors from a German ethnic background in the United German and Scandinavian Lutheran Synod of Queensland were, even if Australian-born, trained in Germany mainly at the Hermannsburg Seminary for Missionaries in Hanover or at Neuendettelsau in Bavaria.[7]

Pastors from the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Queensland (ELSQ), received training at a greater variety of institutions in Germany but many were trained at Basle in Switzerland.[8] But among those pastors in the United German and Scandinavian Lutheran Synod of Queensland who can be identified as being of Scandinavian rather than German origin, there appears to be no clear pattern of pre-ordination training. Two Scandinavian pastors in Queensland, Hansen and Christensen were ordained in 1881 and 1886 respectively by their fellow pastors apparently

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[7] Theile 142 ff.
[8] Theile 142.

without any seminary training,[9] as was Carl Bjelke-Petersen in New Zealand.

This practice, among a people who were an ethnic minority group within a church comprised of two ethnic minorities, can be explained by two factors. First, the Scandinavians lacked the resources to train pastors through the traditional European seminary methods, and secondly, they were struggling to find sufficient pastors to minister to their growing but increasingly scattered migrant adherents.[10] This was as true of New Zealand as it was of Queensland[11] and leads to the proposition that in spite of his linguistic gifts and undoubted pastoral industry, Carl Bjelke-Petersen's theological education and preparation for ministry may have been less than adequate.

And into what sort of church was he ordained? As noted in the previous section, the history of nineteenth century Australian Lutheranism is the story of schisms, splits and splinter groups. Theological and ethnic differences, coupled with the sheer size of the Australian continent and the comparatively small size of the Lutheran community in the dominant Anglo-Irish culture made the development of organizational structures almost

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[9] Theile 145.
[10] Holtzknecht 161.
[11] Brauer 357.

impossible. Lutheran ecclesiology, if it existed, was weak.

II.

In 1897, eight years after the withdrawal of the Danes from the United German and Scandinavian Synod, and three years after his ordination, Carl Bjelke-Petersen was asked to come to Queensland to minister to Danish Lutherans scattered around the state, but based among the small Scandinavian congregation at Kangaroo Point, on the southern side of the Brisbane River. Among those to whom he was to minister was a small group of Danish Lutherans who had taken up land in the South Burnett district.

Around the turn of the century, Carl Bjelke-Petersen was not the only itinerant Lutheran pastor visiting the South Burnett. Indeed, his tenure was very short. Travelling by Cobb & Co coach, he would stay in the South Burnett for several weeks at a time before returning to Brisbane. In 1903, he returned to New Zealand, and the next year Maren Poulsen followed him for their marriage.

Pastors from other Lutheran synods also followed their settlers into the area. From Rosevale came Pastor Doblies of the United German and Scandinavian Lutheran Synod; from Bethania (south of Brisbane) came Pastor Theile of

the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Queensland, and from Toowoomba came Pastor Nichterlein of the ELSA.[12]

It was not until 1920, that any adequate full time ministry was exercised to the Danish congregation meeting at Edenvale, when the congregation was received into the membership of the United German and Scandinavian Lutheran Synod of Queensland and English was adopted as the language of worship. The following year that synod became part of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (UELCA). The schisms within Lutheranism, some based on theological differences, some on ethnic differences and shortages of clergy were the main reasons that the Edenvale Danes were unable to secure the services of a pastor.[13]

This meant that for the first twenty formative years of its life, irrespective of what new directions in theology or strengthening of ecclesiastical structures there may have been, the Edenvale congregation - to which the Bjelke-Petersen family had returned in 1913, remained pietistic in its theology and congregationalist in its polity. Pietism in faith and congregationalism in polity sat well with the pioneering individualism of the early settlers.

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[12] M.Bjelke-Petersen 10.

[13] J.E.Murphy & E.W.Easton, *Wilderness to wealth. A history of the shires of Nanango, Kingaroy, Murgon, Kilkivan and the upper Yarraman portion of Rosalie Shire* (Brisbane: np, 1950) 350-51.

As for Carl Bjelke-Petersen, very little is heard of him after his return to the South Burnett. He appears to have taken little active part in the life of his former congregation at Edenvale. He did not act in times of pastoral vacancy at Edenvale after his return from New Zealand and there is almost no public record of his life and activities in the Kingaroy district after 1913. It is known that his voice, important for a preacher, began to fail while in New Zealand which may have been partly responsible for his retirement from active ministry, and that he underwent an operation on his throat in Melbourne in 1914. This could account for his silence on returning to the South Burnett. Hoey - whose mother was the sister of Maren Bjelke-Petersen (nee Poulsen) - also suggests that it was not only his voice, and that implies that Carl also suffered from a nervous disorder, and was, for example, unable to tolerate noise around the house.[14] Joh Bjelke-Petersen wrote of his father:

> Apart from doing a little gardening, he virtually lived in his room, reading, writing and translating. Eventually, he took to having his meals by himself.[15]

On the other hand, his wife Maren was actively involved in the Edenvale congregation, commencing a Sunday School in a local farmer's barn in 1916, and his son Christian ran a home bible study group during the late 1920s until his death in 1929.

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[14] Hoey 11.
[15] J.Bjelke-Petersen 10.

Joh Bjelke-Petersen has paid tribute to his father's scholarship and spirituality, saying of Carl:

> He had a depth of knowledge and understanding in many ways and on the spiritual side he was also an ordained minister, and we read books together and discussed books and I believe I obtained a deep insight into the Christian faith and religion. No doubt about that in my mind.[18]

Hoey says that to an outsider, Carl may have appeared a 'background figure'. But he was even more influential than Joh's mother in "determining the public image Joh would assume". "In a sense," says Hoey, "Joh has become the mouth piece for what was the very private life of his father."[19]

III.

Joh Bjelke-Petersen's public accounts of his own early life have always emphasized the contrast between the scholarly proclivities of his father and his brother Christian, against the pietistic pragmatism of Johannes and his mother Maren.[20] Reflecting on the major influences on his life in 1975, Joh Bjelke-Petersen spoke of the, "loving attitude of my mother, the dedication and courage over the years, as well as my father's teaching".[21] His mother's role is attested to by her nephew Les Hoey:

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[18] Muston 5.
[19] Hoey 11.
[20] Lunn, *Joh* 18 and J.Bjelke-Petersen Chapters 2-4.
[21] Muston 6.

> Joh's mother was his mentor and close working-companion in his early formative years. She retained that role to only a slightly lesser extent right through till the time of his marriage in his early forties.[22]

Joh Bjelke-Petersen's mother, Maren had been born in Skjod in Denmark to Hans and Agnete Poulsen in 1880. The Poulsens were dairy farmers and facing depressed rural conditions in Europe decided in 1888 to follow the example of Agnete's bothers and emigrate to the Antipodes. In this they were little different from many European migrants at that time; but it is important to note that their motives were economic and not religious. Maren's brother Thomas had gone to Tasmania; Christian to New Zealand and Christen to southern Queensland. The Poulsens joined him in the Lockyer Valley, a fertile agricultural area west of Brisbane favoured by many immigrants from northern Europe. Later in 1894, as the breaking up of the larger pastoral runs into smaller agricultural blocks took place, the family took up a selection in the South Burnett, along with a number of other Danish farmers. The Poulsens named their selection "Good Hope".

This closer agricultural settlement in the eighteen nineties was the second stage of settlement in the area which lasted until the establishment of the peanut industry in the nineteen twenties. The first stage of the

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[22] Hoey 11.

district's development began when the Haly brothers took up Taabinga pastoral run in 1846. The breaking up of large pastoral runs and the closer settlement of the district by agriculturalists were facilitated by changes in the state land laws began in 1883.

The Danish settlers, including Joh Bjelke-Petersen's maternal grandparents were part of this second stage of settlement. Much of the original vegetation was rainforest. Closer settlement, and subsequent land clearing stimulated the logging industry, and in 1904 the town of Kingaroy was established as the railhead for timber and the district's maize and dairy produce. The district developed quickly, and by 1912 the Kingaroy Shire, which had formerly been incorporated in Nanango Shire was established.

Indeed so quickly was the land cleared and utilized for cultivation that one district pioneer, J.F.F.Reid recalled in 1944,

> While the embers of the camp fires of its pioneers are still warm, it seems incredible that clearing, development and cultivation of such vast tracts of country. . . is the work of a single generation of Queenslanders.[23]

Addressing the Historical Society of Queensland, Reid continued nostalgically:

> Those of us . . . among the first pioneer agricultural settlers can still hear the ring

[23] J.F.F.Reid, "Land settlement in the South Burnett," *Historical Society of Queensland Journal* 3 (1945) 317.

> of the axes telling of new conquests, can still smell the smoke of the first scrub burn, and can still hear the creak of bullock waggons. . . We can still see those fine women working shoulder to shoulder with their men, making their new homes - real homes - in the wilderness and giving their mates comradeship and affection and the faith that moves mountains.[24]

However, the faith that moved mountains left in its wake agricultural practices that moved soils, so that the activities of that single generation of Queenslanders also resulted in the development of a serious erosion problem in the district, such that by 1939 the Queensland Government's Department of Agriculture was implementing erosion control measures.[25]

IV.

These early pioneers of the South Burnett were imbued with a deep Christian piety. Maren Bjelke-Petersen recalled how her family spent Sunday in the days before the Edenvale Church was built in 1901:

> Though there was no church building or organized church life, Sunday was kept by many families as a day of rest; and home devotions were not neglected. My parents had brought with them the old Family Bible, a book of sermons and their hymnbook. Thus Sunday morning was ushered in with family worship; singing and prayer, and my father's voice reading one of the sermons.
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> As time went on, a group of families met in each other's homes in turn, and a type of lay reading service was held in the afternoon

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[24] Reid 318.

[25] J.A.Kerr, "Agriculture in the South Burnett," *Queensland Agricultural Journal* (May 1951) 254.

> followed by cups of tea and fellowship. Thus for these pioneers, Sunday became not only a day of relaxation but also a day of fellowship with sacred themes.[26]

Deprived by both distance and the smallness of their fellowship, of the ministrations of ordained clergy of their own faith, and cut off by their ethnic backgrounds from worship among English speaking people, the Danish settlers exemplified the two significant characteristics of the religious culture of the South Burnett we have already noted. First, of necessity, a congregationalism in their churchmanship; and secondly a personal piety in their practice. It was a piety which, as Maren Bjelke-Petersen indicates, they had brought with them across the sea; a piety which sustained them in their striving to create a living from the land; and a piety which because of the cohesive social structure arising from their ethnicity and rural location would be transmitted to succeeding generations.

The Danish pioneers shared with other settlers an underlying belief that the land and people of the South Burnett were especially blessed by God and that their hard work and piety would be rewarded by material prosperity. The name chosen for the first church in the area - Edenvale - gives the clue to this 'God's Own Country' ethos. The natural environment of the district would sustain them in that view. This rich and fertile

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[26] M.Bjelke-Petersen 4-5.

agricultural area encouraged succeeding generations to think themselves especially blessed, with an average annual rainfall of 28"; an average annual humidity of 70%; an undulating topography originally covered by rain forest and hardwood eucalypt forest; and highly productive red loam soils of volcanic origin, suitable for maize, dairying and, as was later discovered, peanut growing.[27]

The enduring character of this ethos was highlighted in 1959, when Kingaroy celebrated the centenary of Queensland's separation from New South Wales with a Blessing of the Plough ceremony. The address was given by Bjelke-Petersen's political mentor, Charles Adermann, the local federal member and a lay preacher. Like Bjelke-Petersen, Adermann was the son of pietistic pioneering parents. Just as the Bjelke-Petersen family help lay the foundations of Lutheranism in the South Burnett, the Adermann family founded and fostered the Church in Christ in the district.[28] Adermann told the four hundred people gathered that autumn afternoon in Memorial Park:

> ...because the 'earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof' so we have the reaping and harvest of effort. As a man has sown, so has been the reaping... Thus we bless the Lord, for a century of achievement, for the lessons and experience of a pioneering beginning; for growth, progress, and development.[29]

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[27] Kerr 252.
[28] Haigh 170.
[29] *KH* 21.5.1959.

Quoting the Old Testament, Adermann emphasized that hard work went hand in hand with piety as preconditions for divine favour:

> As Job put it: 'Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity and sow wickedness shall reap the same.' But let us as Isaiah tells us, 'Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy. break up your fallow ground. For it is time to seek the Lord till he comes and rains righteousness upon you.[30]

Adermann concluded:

> Let us heed the injunction of our Lord: no man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God.[31]

v.

The emergence of the ethos expressed by Adermann was assisted by the fact that a large proportion of the population in the South Burnett was committed to evangelical Christianity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In the first decade of the twentieth century the Edenvale Church was used by the Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians and another Lutheran (ELSA) congregation, in the spirit of practical ecumenism that prevails in the bush.[32]

An ELSA congregation was established at Kumbia near Kingaroy in 1908, and in the succeeding half decade the

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[30] *KH* 21.5.1959.
[31] *KH* 21.5.1959.
[32] M.Bjelke-Petersen 10.

congregation was ministered to by some eleven different pastors; only four of whom settled permanently in Kumbia or Kingaroy. This lack of settled clergy certainly gave impetus to the congregationalist principle in the life of the Kumbia Lutherans. In 1912, during the tenure of Pastor B.Schwartz, a church building was constructed and in 1918, a manse.[33] In 1946 the congregation moved to worship in Kingaroy and a new church building was opened there.[34]

With the establishment of the town of Kingaroy in 1908, other Christian denominations moved to build churches and place clergy in the district. The Roman Catholic Church started in Kingaroy in the home of local publican Dan Carroll. In 1908 a church was built while the congregation was attached to Nanango parish; a connection which remained until 1927, at which point a convent and school were also established.[35] Like the Catholic Church, the Church of England in Kingaroy owed its establishment to support from Nanango in its earliest years. A church was built at Taabinga in 1904 and in 1908 a priest, the Rev P.S.Wigram inducted. A church in Kingaroy town was built in 1910. Five different priests served the parish until 1926; that year marking the beginning of two long incumbencies from 1926 to 1938 and

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[33] Brauer 346-7.
[34] *KH* 8.8.1946.
[35] Murphy and Easton 354.

from 1938 to 1949.[36] The Presbyterian Church established a congregation and a church building in Kingaroy in 1908; but the Presbyterian parish was linked to Nanango until 1932,[37] which meant that the Kingaroy Presbyterians did not receive the services of a full time ordained minister until that year. For the first twenty four years, the Presbyterian cause was largely in the hands of laymen.

Lutheranism was not the only form of evangelical pietism to flourish in the South Burnett. The Churches of Christ congregation in Kingaroy began in the Adermann family home at Wooroolin in 1909 where "the family worshipped together."[38] After contact was made with other Churches of Christ families in the district services commenced in the Perrett home at Booie. By 1913 the first minister had arrived, but the congregation was later left for periods of time without the services of a full time minister. Further impetus was given to the growth of the congregation by a tent mission in 1925 and a chapel was constructed in 1926.[39]

Salvation Army meetings began in Kingaroy in 1910 and a building was constructed in the following year. Some six agents occupied the field for the Salvation Army over the

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[36] Murphy and Easton 349.
[37] Bardon 236.
[38] Haigh 170.
[39] Haigh 170.

next forty years.[40] Somewhat surprisingly, given the strength of other evangelical denominations in Kingaroy, the Baptist Church did not establish a congregation until 1950.[41]

After the foundation of the town of Kingaroy, the form of evangelical religion to become most strongly established in the district was Methodism. The first Methodist church was erected in 1908 and a circuit (parish) formally constituted in 1909 under the leadership of the Rev A.A.Mills. The parishioners of Edenvale assisted by lending the Methodists an organ and seating for the church opening. In the three decades following Mills' departure in 1914, Kingaroy was served by a succession of ten Methodist ministers. The average Methodist pastorate was just over three years, and the longest was the five year ministry the Rev A.C.Tempest during World War II.[42] The practice of short term ministries was Methodist policy. In consequence the real power and authority in the local church was exercised by the lay people, particularly through local preachers, who rather than the clergy, were the primary agents for the transmission of Methodist teachings and values. Thus a de-facto congregationalism operated in Methodism. This was in spite of the denomination's well structured system of central administration, which was efficient in church

[40] Murphy and Easton 350.
[41] White 228.
[42] Dingle 276 ff.

administration, but less effective, and to some extent less interested, in influencing the more deep seated values of its membership, a consequence perhaps of its lack of a confessional foundation.

During World War I, the Australian Lutheranism saw its constituency decimated, as Lutherans attempted to Anglicize not only their names but also their religion. The greatest beneficiary was Methodism, a denomination also influenced by evangelical pietism. This affinity between Methodism and pietistic Lutheranism is not surprising given the influence of the German Pietist movement on Methodism's founder John Wesley through the agency of the Moravians. The stream of German Pietism flowed strongly through both Methodism and Lutheranism.[43]

In Kingaroy, the UELCA Lutherans and Methodists established good working relationships between the wars. In 1948, the departing UELCA Pastor Herb Schmidt praised the co-operation between the two denominations when referring to the fact that the Lutherans had used the Yarraman Methodist Church for some sixteen years saying, "This manifestation of goodwill between the two churches was a good and fine thing."[44] At the opening of the Methodist Church the year before Joh Bjelke-Petersen

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[43] For the impact of Pietism on both continental Lutheranism and British Methodism see Stoeffler.
[44] *KH* 19.6.1948.

displayed a greater ecumenical spirit than he was to exhibit as Premier with his comment that, "he prayed the new church would be the means of bringing many to the realization and knowledge of God."[45]

Therefore, in the decades following the founding of Kingaroy town, the district could be said to have become more religious as it outgrew its earlier frontier character, and as agriculture - especially the peanut industry - became more established. Yet the arrival of denominational Christianity did not greatly alter the character of religion in the South Burnett. Pietism in faith and congregationalism in polity still held sway. For in the vanguard of this increased religiosity were Methodism and Lutheranism, denominations in which the influence of evangelical pietism was extensive.

Table 3 sets out the proportion of the population in both the South Burnett and the colony, later state, of Queensland who adhered to the various denominational groups from 1861, when the first Queensland Census was taken, to 1947. The figures show, first, that as the twentieth century progressed the proportion of Church of England and Roman Catholic adherents in the population of the South Burnett decreased and the proportion of Lutheran and Methodist adherents increased. For example,

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[45] *KH* 16.10.1947.

TABLE 3: RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION IN THE SOUTH BURNETT AND THE STATE OF QUEENSLAND

(PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BY DENOMINATION IN CENSUS YEARS)

YEAR	1861		1864		1868		1871		1876	
DENOMINATION	S.BURNETT	QLD	S.BURNETT	QLD	S.BURNETT	QLD	S.BURNETT	QLD	S.BURNETT	QLD
BAPTIST	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.80	2.09	0.31	2.41	0.62	2.48
CHURCH OF ENGLAND	40.30	44.64	40.60	41.70	44.84	37.50	39.91	36.43	42.39	35.75
CONGREGATIONALIST	0.02	2.35	0.72	2.46	0.60	2.15	0.60	2.20	0.87	2.05
LUTHERAN	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7.90	6.34	12.45	7.15	8.34	7.03
METHODIST	0.41	4.77	2.16	5.05	1.81	5.20	1.19	5.99	7.24	6.38
PRESBYTERIAN	6.01	12.30	10.30	13.50	9.69	13.27	8.53	12.79	8.78	10.93
ROMAN CATHOLIC	23.85	25.50	27.60	26.20	26.06	26.50	26.49	28.62	27.09	24.90
OTHER CHRISTIAN	15.76	7.71	6.70	8.70	N/A	1.61	0.02	0.48	0.09	0.65
OTHER RELIGIONS	1.86	1.66	0.48	1.11	5.05	3.11	7.69	2.09	1.41	7.02
UNSPECIFIED	11.79	1.07	11.44	1.20	3.25	4.32	3.12	3.45	3.79	5.29
TOTAL:	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

TABLE 3: RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION IN THE SOUTH BURNETT AND THE STATE OF QUEENSLAND 1864-1947

<CONTINUED>

	1881		1886		1891		1901		1911	
DENOMINATION	S.BURNETT	QLD	S.BURNETT	QLD	S.BURNETT	QLD	S.BURNETT	QLD	S.BURNETT	QLD
BAPTIST	0.44	2.62	0.53	2.64	1.41	2.60	1.22	2.43	1.80	2.23
CHURCH OF ENGLAND	44.88	32.62	47.90	34.99	46.71	36.21	46.90	36.76	33.99	36.25
CONGREGATIONALIST	0.48	2.23	1.39	2.18	0.29	2.18	0.43	1.83	0.67	1.77
LUTHERAN	9.60	7.91	8.52	6.60	4.52	5.94	5.65	5.60	7.00	4.10
METHODIST	3.64	6.72	3.57	7.66	5.19	2.53	5.06	9.25	10.61	10.16
PRESBYTERIAN	8.22	10.59	8.14	10.46	9.24	11.59	8.59	11.44	11.70	12.88
ROMAN CATHOLIC	29.22	25.47	24.05	23.87	26.58	28.56	25.83	23.97	19.72	23.35
OTHER CHRISTIAN	0.03	0.59	0.20	0.97	2.57	2.59	0.87	1.76	9.01	7.20
OTHER RELIGIONS	2.71	8.48	2.01	7.09	1.29	0.56	1.39	4.53	0.06	1.27
UNSPECIFIED	1.22	5.39	4.22	6.18	3.61	14.84	5.28	4.86	7.16	3.02
TOTAL:	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

TABLE 8: RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION IN THE SOUTH BURNETT AND THE STATE OF QUEENSLAND 1864-1947

<CONTINUED>

	1921		1933		1947	
DENOMINATION	S.BURNETT	QLD	S.BURNETT	QLD	S.BURNETT	QLD
BAPTIST	1.17	1.94	0.42	1.58	0.47	1.48
CHURCH OF ENGLAND	34.70	40.98	27.54	35.03	27.48	35.12
CONGREGATIONALIST	0.09	1.38	0.16	0.91	0.09	0.77
LUTHERAN	11.98	2.38	8.19	1.98	8.96	1.92
METHODIST	21.68	10.26	16.11	9.27	18.60	11.28
PRESBYTERIAN	9.02	12.11	11.84	11.27	12.48	10.98
ROMAN CATHOLIC	17.98	23.39	14.75	21.88	15.48	23.84
OTHER CHRISTIAN	2.38	2.81	6.66	3.78	4.33	4.24
OTHER RELIGIONS	0.06	0.56	0.88	0.23	0.83	0.17
UNSPECIFIED	2.35	7.09	14.67	15.81	12.79	12.64
TOTAL:	100	100	100	100	100	100

by 1921, there were more Lutheran and Methodist (36.2%) adherents combined than Church of England (34.7%).

Secondly, although the proportion of Lutherans in the population of Queensland dropped from approximately 7% at the height of German and Scandinavian immigration in the eighteen seventies to approximately 2% in 1947, the proportion of Lutherans in the South Burnett remained high. It was 12.45% in 1871, but by 1947 it had only diminished to 9%. By comparison over the same period, the Roman Catholic proportion of the population in the South Burnett diminished from 26.49% to 15.4%. So Lutheranism in the South Burnett demonstrated a capacity to withstand attrition.

Indeed, the figures call in to question the notion that Lutherans defected to Methodism as a result of World War I even though Methodism more than doubled its adherents in the intercensal period 1911-1921. Certainly, the Lutheran proportion of the state population nearly halved between 1911 and 1921, but in the South Burnett there was an increase of nearly 5%. So whatever happened elsewhere, Lutheranism certainly strengthened its position in the South Burnett after World War I.

Thus the evangelical pietism bequeathed Bjelke-Petersen by his parents was reinforced by the religious culture of the South Burnett. Living in that culture Bjelke-Petersen also developed a strong affinity for the land; a strong

desire to dominate and subdue the landscape coupled with a strong fear of the only ideology or values system the culture perceived as a threat to its hard won domination of the land: communism. Christianity was no threat to the dominant ethos of the South Burnett, for like the land itself, the Christian faith had been hewn to fit the demands and needs of the settlers. So, in the formative years of Bjelke-Petersen's early adulthood, what were the forces fashioning the religious and political culture of the South Burnett?

CHAPTER 7.

PIETISM AND REVIVALISM IN THE RELIGIOUS CULTURE OF THE SOUTH BURNETT

> **Just as the soil has to be thoroughly ploughed and prepared before it will yield a bountiful harvest, so we also have to pass through a similar preparation before we can become a blessing to others.**
> Kingaroy Lutheran Pastor Herb Schmidt to Bjelke-Petersen 5.2.1938.[1]

I.

The nineteen forties saw Bjelke-Petersen's interest focus on politics, as evidenced by his secretaryship of the local Country Party branch, his contest of the pre-selection ballot against sitting MLA J.B.Edwards[2] in 1944, his election to the Kingaroy Shire Council in 1946 and his election to the Queensland Parliament in 1947. However, in the nineteen thirties, the early years of Bjelke-Petersen's adulthood, his interests outside farming and contracting were taken up by the local Lutheran Church. In 1930 he commenced teaching Sunday School at the age of nineteen, and in 1938 he became a lay preacher, assisting the ordained Lutheran clergyman

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[1] quoted in Townsend 176.

[2] J.B.Edwards (1879 - 1952) was Country Party MLA for the seat of Nanango from 1920 to 1947, when he retired. Born in Hamilton, Victoria of farming stock, Edwards came to the Darling Downs in 1898, and to Kingaroy in 1908 where he engaged in dairy farming. Waterson lists Edwards' religious denomination as Church of England. D.Waterson, *A biographical register of the Queensland Parliament 1860-1929* (Canberra: ANU Press, 1972) 52.

by conducting worship services in the smaller, more rural preaching places of the Kingaroy Lutheran Parish such as Home Creek. But his major involvement in the life of the church was through the Edenvale branch Lutheran Young Peoples' Society (LYPS).

Formed in 1930, the Edenvale LYPS was one of a number of such bodies through out the South Burnett. There were also branches at Taabinga, Home Creek, Mondure, Cloyna and Murgon.[3] The Edenvale LYPS grew numerically during the decade; eighty people attended the Society's fifth anniversary banquet in 1936[4] and one hundred and twenty the next year.[5] These are not insignificant numbers in a shire which recorded 561 Lutherans of all ages in the 1933 Census.[6] The motto of the LYPS was 'Plus Ultra', 'Ever Higher'. Joh Bjelke-Petersen and his sister Neta were leaders of the Edenvale Society; Neta as secretary and Joh as vice-president for the first year and then president.[7] The meetings, of which there were two every month, were either 'devotional' or 'social'. Scripture reading, hymn singing and prayer were part of the program of every meeting. Musical items, recitations and debates made up much of the remaining program.

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[3] *KH* 9.10.1936.
[4] *KH* 9.10.1936.
[5] *KH* 29.10 1937.
[6] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 1933 Census.
[7] *KH* 1.7.1932.

After Joh became president, the meetings were frequently held in his parents' home at Edenvale. The annual meeting for 1933 commenced with the hymn, "The Lord hath helped me hitherto" and included a debate on the subject, "That the pen is mightier than the sword".[8] The topic debated at the 1934 annual general meeting was "That poverty produces more misery than riches".[9] In both debates, Joh Bjelke-Petersen spoke for the negative.

The debates were a critical part of Bjelke-Petersen's personal development, as were the public speaking opportunities afforded him though the LYPS. Few of his contemporaries in the LYPS were as interested in the verbal arts. A public speaking competition at the 1937 regional LYPS gathering at Murgon attracted only three entrants; Joh, Neta, and a Mr A.Schablon of Murgon and they were placed in that order.[10]

The Lutheran Young Peoples' Societies were well integrated into the life of the Lutheran Church. Pastor F.O.Theile addressed the Edenvale branch on the Lutheran Missions in New Guinea in 1932,[11] and representatives from Edenvale attended youth meetings which were part of the annual district (i.e. state) synod of the Lutheran Church. Both Joh and Neta attended these meetings frequently in the thirties, including the centenary

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[8] *KH* 17.7.1933.
[9] *KH* 23.7.1934.
[10] *KH* 14.5.1937.
[11] *KH* 28.10.1932.

celebration of Lutheranism in Queensland at Nundah in 1938.[12]

During these years Bjelke-Petersen's spiritual formation was most strongly influenced by Lutheran pastor Herb Schmidt. Schmidt arrived in Kingaroy in 1932, when Bjelke-Petersen was 21 years of age and left in 1948, the year after Bjelke-Petersen entered Parliament. Australian-born and trained in Adelaide, Schmidt spent nearly four years at Nambour after seminary, before his appointment to the Edenvale-Taabinga-Home Creek congregations, his second pastoral charge.[13]

In paying tribute to Schmidt's ministry at his farewell in 1948, Bjelke-Petersen focused on Schmidt's work among young people and the development of the Lutheran radio ministry on the local commercial radio station 4SB, as the most significant achievements of Schmidt's ministry.

It was under Schmidt's tutelage that Joh Bjelke-Petersen began lay preaching and made his debut on radio in the Lutheran program on 4SB. The skills in public speaking and media served as a good training ground for the future politician, which Bjelke-Petersen acknowledged saying:

> I have always felt grateful to Pastor Schmidt in that he has given me ...the opportunity of playing a part in the work of our church, first in the Sunday school, and afterwards in the church organization.[14]

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[12] *KH* 28.4.1938; 9.5.1938.
[13] Theile 163.
[14] *KH* 4.11.1948.

Schmidt acknowledged the significance of the home in the transmission of religious values to young people in a farewell address at Yarraman in 1948:

> A pastor's work depended a great deal on a Christian home. Bible study in the home was of tremendous importance to young people. It was something solid for them to put their feet on.[15]

The LYPS played a key role not only in the religious socialization of Young Lutherans, but in their *political* socialization as well.

> [T]o our youth we look to build the homes of the future, through which the church and nation will be built, and upon which our social and national well-being depends,

Schmidt told the Edenvale LYPS annual general meeting in 1933.[16] The Edenvale LYPS annual general meeting in 1936 commenced with the Loyal Toast and the singing of the National Anthem.[17] A regional gathering of LYPS representatives and Sunday School teachers which Joh and Neta attended in Murgon the following year, passed a motion of loyalty and heard a paper on communism read by Pastor M.Lohe. Lohe also told the gathering:

> Christ called to a life of holiness. The call was one to loyalty. Youth must be loyal to Christ, to the nation, to the home, to its high principles. But loyalty also brought with it service.[18]

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[15] *KH* 28. 10.19 48.
[16] *KH* 1.9.1933.
[17] *KH* 9.10.36.
[18] *KH* 14.5.1937.

Holiness, loyalty and service, three virtues which were not only an integral part of world-view being formed in Joh Bjelke-Petersen; but they were virtues being encouraged in other Protestant young people in the district through organizations like Christian Endeavour, the Order of Knights, Girls Comradeship,and temperance organizations like the Band of Hope.

II.

The Christian Endeavour movement was established in Kingaroy in 1931, by the Rev W.T.Phillips, Methodist minister from 1931 to 1934. Christian Endeavour, a para-church movement which was incipiently fundamentalist in character,[19] was an interdenominational movement whose objects were,

> to promote an earnest Christian life among its members, to increase their mutual acquaintance, and to make them more useful in the service of God.[20]

The movement was founded by the Rev Francis E.Clark, a Congregationalist minister in Portland, Maine in 1881, following a revival in his church. The first Australian Christian Endeavour meeting was held in the Wharf Street Baptist Church in Brisbane in either 1886 or 1887.[21] As its objects show, the movement's primary concern was the succour of those within the faith, rather than the

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[19] Parker 45 and 146 ff for Christian Endeavour and 'incipient fundamentalism' respectively.
[20] *Life & Times* 9.12.1981: 6-7.
[21] *Life & Times* 9.12.1981: 6-7.

conversion of those without. In this sense it is pietistic rather than evangelical.

The first quarterly rally of the Christian Endeavour Union in the South Burnett was held in June 1932.[22] By 1938 this had become an Easter Convention in the Star Theatre in Murgon attended by 200 people. Baptists, Methodists and the Salvation Army were involved.[23] When Phillips was being farewelled from Kingaroy in 1933, his senior circuit steward, C.Hill said of Christian Endeavour that he," believed the movement was going to do more for church unity than any other..."[24] In a spirit of denominational acceptance derived from their common commitment to evangelicalism, Churches of Christ Pastor R.W.Payne followed Phillips as president of the local Christian Endeavour branch.[25]

Phillips also established four branches of the temperance organization Band of Hope during his three years in Kingaroy, as well as a branch of the Order of Knights and Girls Comradeship at Coolabunia.[26] His preaching was described by circuit steward Hill as "forceful, faithful, evangelical and convincing,"[27] and Phillips himself was described by the Rev C.B.Watts, the Kingaroy Presbyterian

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[22] *KH* 13.6.1932.
[23] *KH* 25.4.1938.
[24] *KH* 10.4.1933.
[25] *KH* 20.5.1935.
[26] *KH* 3.6.1932.
[27] *KH* 10.4.1933.

minister of the day as 'evangelical at heart'.[28] Yet Phillips, an evangelical, seemed to relish establishing structures for the promotion and maintenance of particular Christian behaviour. Indeed like no other denomination, Methodism provided an almost complete replication of the social and cultural facilities within the local community for its members and adherents. There were Methodist Church cricket teams, croquet teams, debating teams, an annual Methodist sports day as well as an annual flower show. Lawton Jones writing of English Methodism a century before acknowledged that,

> aesthetic, recreational, ethical and intellectual interests played a major part in the appeal Methodism made...Lacking the amenities of the cities, the population in the new areas made the Methodist chapel their social and cultural centres.[29]

The ELSA also had an organization for young people. The Luther League, as it was called, had at least two branches; one at Edenvale and one at Kumbia. The Luther Leagues liked debates and, for example, 100 people attended a debate on the White Australia Policy between the two branches in 1932.[30]

The promotion of good citizenship pervaded the youth work of Kingaroy Protestant churches in the thirties. The Methodist Comrades and the Order of Knights debated,

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[28] *KH* 10.4.1933.
[29] W.Lawson Jones, "Some psychological conditions of the development of Methodism up to 1850," *British Journal of Psychology* 42.4, (Nov 1951): 351.
[30] *KH* 25.11.1933.

"That women should have equal rights for citizenship as men," in 1933.[31] Methodist layman Oliver Brandon addressed the Churches of Christ Christian Endeavour group on the theme of citizenship that year also.[32] The meeting was chaired by C.F.Adermann. Methodist local preacher D.Smallbone spoke at a Methodist semi-jubilee dinner, also in 1933, of how in addition to morning and evening worship and Sunday School,

> they had also the Christian Endeavour and other organizations now so that the church in the town and district was continually engaged in ...helping to build up and striving to make noble citizens.[33]

Presbyterian minister C.B.Watts echoed this notion that the function of the church was to produce good citizens; that is people who would behave in public life in accordance with what they regarded as Christian standards of behaviour. Welcoming the visiting President-General of the Methodist Church on behalf of the Kingaroy Ministers' Fraternal in 1934 Watts said:

> Because the church which the guest of the evening represented was raising the ideals not only of the religious life, but of the civic life of the community, to set before the people something high and lofty and was doing everything possible to extend the Kingdom of God, and to bring in the reign of righteousness, and to usher into this country . a better, purer and nobler day, the Kingaroy ministers fraternal gave him a very sincere and brotherly welcome.[34]

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[31] *KH* 25.9.1933.
[32] *KH* 5.6.1933.
[33] *KH* 26.5.1933.
[34] *KH* 20.3.1934.

Similar words were heard from the President of the Queensland Conference of the Churches of Christ in Queensland, at the denomination's annual conference held in Kingaroy in 1938. Mr A.W.Ladbrook told the conference:

> It had been said that the Christian Churches today leave untouched the inequities and injustices of life. He maintained instead that the Churches did not believe this statement, but were exercising a vital influence in moulding the moral standards of the communities they serve.[35]

At this point evangelical piety moves towards a moralism devoid of some of the central dynamics of the Christian faith. For when it came to putting into practice that good citizenship to which the young were encouraged to aspire, the social conscience of the Kingaroy churches was only concerned with alcohol and sabbatarianism.

At a welcome to the new Churches of Christ minister, Pastor V.Boettcher in 1937, Methodist layman Smallbone had encouraged greater co-operation among the churches. Boettcher responded that:

> social questions needed a united front from the Protestant churches...such questions as the desecration of the Lord's Day and the drink traffic should receive the united protest of the churches.[36]

W.T.Phillips, the Methodist minister, was a strong temperance advocate. He moved a resolution on the issue at the Methodist District Synod at Pialba in 1931,[37]

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[35] *KH* 26.9.1938.
[36] *KH* 15.3.1937.
[37] *KH* 9.11.1931.

and in 1933 organized a large temperance rally held at the Olympia Theatre in Kingaroy.[38] Unity among evangelical Protestants was demonstrated at a Womens' Christian Temperance Union public lecture later that year attended also by Watts of the Presbyterian Church and Payne of the Churches of Christ.[39] A clampdown in 1937 by the Kingaroy Shire Council on alcohol consumption at dances and balls after midnight on Saturdays engendered both opposition and support in the correspondence columns of the local newspaper.[40] True to the words of Ladbrook quoted above, the major reportage of the 1938 Churches of Christ annual conference in Kingaroy focused on "STRICTER ENFORCEMENT OF LIQUOR LAWS SOUGHT BY CHURCHES OF CHRIST", while the sub-heading ran "Gambling and Sunday Sport Condemned."[41] A contribution to the Kingaroy Herald in 1933 by 'An Endeavourer' entitled, "What to do on Sunday" promoted sabbatarianism.[42]

How one behaved, rather than what one believed, had become the focal point of religious experience. "Faithfulness in a minister also implies that he ... is a living example of godliness and piety according to 1 Tim 4-12," Pastor A.E.Reuther of Murgon charged Herb Schmidt at the latter's installation as minister of Edenvale in June 1932 adding that "church elders and members should

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[38] *KH* 8.4.1933.
[39] *KH* 11.8.1933.
[40] *KH* 17.8.1937.
[41] *KH* 29.9.1938.
[42] *KH* 27.3.1933.

show equal faithfulness."[43] Schmidt and the congregation obviously shared this view. Over the sanctuary of the new Bethany Lutheran Church - Bjelke-Petersen's home church - built in 1936, they inscribed the words: "Holiness becometh Thine House O Lord forever Ps 93 v 5".[44]

Yet there is a dualism implicit in the views expressed by Watts and others. In 1932 at a public welcome to R.W.Payne the incoming Churches of Christ pastor, Watts said: "He trusted that Pastor Payne's stay in Kingaroy would be the means of spiritual uplift and added force for civic and public righteousness."[45] The dualism is simply one of promoting pietism, 'spiritual uplift' within the church, and moralism as a 'force for civic and public righteousness', in the community. The same notion had already entered the political stream of consciousness. Local MLA J.B.Edwards told a civic welcome for the President of the Methodist Conference in the same year, 1932, that,

> the public man...no matter what party they (sic) might be following must realize that after all the foundation of the public life must come from the churches."[46]

Here the heritage of Richard Johnson and Samuel Marsden lived on and in future decades would be visited upon the

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[43] *KH* 27.6.1932.
[44] *KH* 27.11.1936.
[45] *KH* 30.9.1932.
[46] *KH* 3.10.1932.

inheritors of Johnson's and Marsden's ecclesiastical mantles.

Furthermore, the real import of this dualism in the thirties was that a moral code devoid of specifically religious belief can become a generally accepted set of social standards with the community. Thus, in the South Burnett district at least, the thirties mark a significant point of transition in the evolution of social and political attitudes. From this time on it was possible to subscribe to Christian moral standards, or more adequately described, conservative morality, without a personal adherence to the faith from which they are derived. This transition accounts, in part, for the appeal of conservative political forces over the next half a century and as we shall see, strong pro-royalist sentiments and aggressive anti-communism soon attached themselves to the baggage train of conservative morality. It can also be seen as a step along the path towards civil religion. But what about religious belief, and the issues of sin, salvation and personal conversion at the core of evangelical religion? What attention did they receive in the South Burnett in the thirties?

III.

That second wellspring of fundamentalism, the revivalist tradition, flowed less strongly in the South Burnett than pietism. Revivalism was strongest in the Churches of

Christ. In July 1931, Mr H.G.Payne, a man described as, "peculiarly fitted for the work of conducting services for the deepening of spiritual life," held a series of revival meetings.[47] The next year R.W.Payne arrived as the Churches of Christ minister and was welcomed by C.F.Adermann, "because the church needed an evangelist."[48] In 1931 the Presbyterians and Methodists also held a United Evangelistic Mission with an outside missioner.[49] In 1936 the South African pentecostal evangelist, Fredrick van Eyk, billed as "Australia's most brilliant preacher and lecturer on world events and the second coming of Jesus Christ,"[50] conducted meetings in the Oddfellows Hall. Van Eyk's address was on the prophetic significance of Mussolini's victories in Abyssinia. Even though, "the hall was crowded with listeners"[51] the mixture of pre-millenialism and pentecostalism failed to disturb the pietism of the South Burnett, and little more is heard of pentecostalism in Kingaroy until the rise of neo-pentecostalism is the nineteen seventies.

Much more to Kingaroy's taste was the visit the next year of Churches of Christ evangelist Jas E. Thomas for a "Great Gospel Campaign...in the big tent". Thomas was a former Federal President of the Churches of Christ,

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[47] *KH* 31.7.1931.
[48] *KH* 30.9.1932.
[49] *KH* 28.9.1931.
[50] *KH* 4.9.1936.
[51] *KH* 7.9.1936.

organizing secretary for the Australian visit of F.B. Meyer and "greatly interested in Christian Endeavour."[532] Indeed Thomas, like Payne in 1931, probably represented a blending of pietism and revivalism. While no attendance figures were published of either van Eyk's or Thomas' meetings, Thomas gave the Churches of Christ congregation sufficient impetus to renovate and extend the chapel they built in 1927.[533]

The only echo in the South Burnett of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy then raging in the United States came in 1931 in a public debate in the *Kingaroy Herald* on the subject of infant baptism. The main protagonists were George Tease, then Churches of Christ minister, and W.T.Phillips. In the debate Tease accused Phillips, who was new to the town, of being "primed by by his predecessor, Mr Larkin, who was a modernist."[534] In the ensuing debate the relationship between infant baptism and modernism is not clear, and the force of the *ad homenim* epithet was undoubtedly lost on all but the theologically literate within the community. The Ministers' Fraternal, of which the UELCA Lutheran Pastor H.Minke was president, closed ranks behind Phillips. Tease withdrew from the Fraternal, and the newspaper's editor declared the correspondence closed shortly afterwards.

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[532] *KH* 1.10.37.
[533] Haigh 170.
[534] *KH* 16.1.1931.

CHAPTER 8.

POPULISM AND PROSPERITY IN THE RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL CULTURE OF THE SOUTH BURNETT.

They in the Kingaroy district were a very fortunate people in having such a great district. That reminded that God was in Heaven and all was right with Kingaroy.

Methodist Minister, Rev C.C.Truman,
in Kingaroy during the Great Depression.[1]

I.

Part of good citizenship was loyalty to the crown and the nation. Concomitant with loyalty was anti-communism. Whereas in the late nineteen forties and nineteen fifties it is political organizations like the Returned Services League and political figures, including Bjelke-Petersen who are the major public opponents of communism,[2] in the thirties the churches were the primary source of anti-communist feeling.

Pastor F.O.Theile told the Queensland UELCA convention at Murgon in April 1932 that, "Three great enemies were threatening the world and the church today: Bolshevism, Nationalism and Materialism."[3] It was only the first mentioned that the church addressed with any seriousness. In May 1931, there was a "crowded congregation" in the

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[1] *KH* 3.10.1932.
[2] *KH* 25.8.1949.
[3] *SBT* 22.4.1932.

Kingaroy Presbyterian Church for a Russian Missionary Society evening, addressed by the Rev J.Leeder, the Society's General Secretary for Australia and New Zealand. The Society, Leeder reported, "was making every effort through preaching the Word of God to stem the tide of unbelief and atheism."[4] In October of that same year, Mrs Mary Edwards, wife of the local Country Party MLA, in opening the annual Methodist fete, asked those present to ponder ". . . what their lives would be like if their pastors and teachers of Christianity were withdrawn, as was the case in Russia." [5]

Initially, opposition to communism was religious because it was atheistic and materialistic. By the nineteen fifties as we shall observe later, the opposition to communism was based on the physical threat it posed to Australia, and more particularly, the manner in which it threatened the economic status quo.

II.

As consciousness of communism, and the threat it allegedly posed, grew among the people of the South Burnett in the thirties, another political movement was emerging: Social Credit. Douglas Social Credit has been defined as

> ...a monetary theory which both `explains' the inner workings of the capitalistic financial

[4] *KH* 18.5.1931.
[5] *KH* 26.11.1931.

> system and offers a remedy for its unsatisfactory functioning in periods of depression and inflation, a political theory which redefines the role of the individual in the democratic state, and an interpretation of history in terms of a long-existing Judaic plot or conspiracy to secure control of and dominate the world.[6]

Founder of the movement, Major C.H.Douglas (1878-1952) was an English engineer who published his theories in the nineteen twenties beginning with *Economic democracy* in 1920. His subsequent major works included *Credit power* (1921), *Social Credit* (1924) and *Warning democracy* (1931).[7] Economists have published countless critiques of Social Credit ideas, but that has not stopped their mass appeal. Douglas was never in favor of Social Credit becoming a political party preferring it to remain a 'movement' influencing existing political parties. Others, however, had different ideas, and in England, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, Social Credit parties contested elections. The Canadian province of Alberta elected a Social Credit government in 1935 which remained in office until 1971 and Social Credit ruled in British Columbia from 1952 to 1972. In the 1935 Queensland state election Social Credit garnered 7% of the vote.[8]

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[6] J.A.Irving, *The Social Credit movement in Alberta* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959) 5.
[7] For a history of the movement in England see J.L.Finlay, *Social Credit: The English origins* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972.)
[8] Hughes 78.

The political gains of Social Credit in Alberta during the thirties were reported on the news pages of the *Kingaroy Herald,*[8] although the *Herald* was editorially opposed to Social Credit. The movement burst to prominence in Kingaroy in September 1934 when the Shire Chairman, Cr J.A.Carroll chaired a pre-election meeting of some 200 people in support of the movement's candidate for the federal electorate of Maranoa, Mr W.Arrgaet.[10]

Prior to that time there had been correspondence in the *Herald* promoting Social Credit, but little public debate. Another meeting, labelled `successful' by the local press was held in December 1934, with Carroll again in the chair[11] and in July 1935, 350 "town and country residents" attended a Social Credit meeting, chaired this time by Cr D.Gallagher.[12] Again this is a significant number in a shire with a population at the 1933 Census of just over 6000 people.[13]

After this meeting the Country Party could no longer ignore the threat posed by Social Credit, and the counter-attack commenced. The relationship between the Country Party and those promoting the ideas of Social

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[8] *KH* 28.8.1935.
[10] *KH* 21.8.1934.
[11] *KH* 14.12.1934.
[12] *KH* 22.7.1935. There does not appear to have been a Social Credit candidate in the 1935 Queensland state election. Only Edwards and Knox (ALP) contested the seat which Edwards won with 63% of the vote. "Return showing detailed results of voting", *Queensland Parliamentary Papers*, 1st session of the 27th Parliament, 1: 14.
[13] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 1933 Census.

Credit both inside and outside the Country Party has remained ambivalent ever since. The seriousness with which the Country Party viewed the threat can be gauged by the personnel they bought to fight the Social Credit bushfire. Local MLA J.B.Edwards convened the meeting, and a former MLA J.C.Kenny was the main speaker. Kenny, it was reported, was "subjected to a running fire of interjections" [14] and the correspondence in the local paper began to flow. No other subject generated as much correspondence in the *Kingaroy Herald* in the thirties as Social Credit. As the correspondence ebbed and flowed, news came of Social Credit's successes in Alberta, and this along with the Country Party's official rejection of Social Credit philosophy encouraged the movement to develop a tighter political organization. A Murgon school teacher resigned to take up the position of organizer for the movement in the Wide Bay and Maranoa federal electorates. In January 1936 Barambah Creek was the site of the movement's first annual basket picnic and sports. Some 500 people attended, nearly ten percent of the population of the shire.[15] Meetings were organized in Kingaroy, Nanango, Yarraman, Blackbutt and Kumbia,[16] and seven branches in the the area formed a District Council. In the meantime, The Australian Labor Party's Ned Hanlon, at that time Minister for Home Affairs, had

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[14] *KH* 9.8.1935.
[15] *KH* 31.1.1936.
[16] *KH* 20.3.1936.

slipped into Kingaroy for a meeting of the local ALP branch which had been reconstituted some six months before. The branch had some 30 financial members.[17] Social Credit endorsed a candidate named Maddern for the seat of Nanango - which included Kingaroy - in the 1938 state election but on the eve of the election dissension struck and Maddern was expelled by the movement [18]. He remained on the ballot and out-polled the ALP candidate Horrie Davies by gathering nearly 30% of the primary vote. The winner, J.B.Edwards, who had held the seat since 1920 received 42% and Labor 28%. Maddern polled well at the Home Creek, Kumbia, and Memerambi booths, poorly at Taabinga, but topped the poll at Yarraman.[19] With the coming of war in 1939 and the emergence of a wartime economy, Social Credit lost much of its impetus. The Social Credit movement was a response to the economic conditions created by the Great Depression of the thirties. Douglas' ideas had remained dormant in the nineteen twenties; they burst forth, particularly in Canada and Australia, with the intensity of a bushfire.

Scholars have drawn attention to the religious dimensions of Social Credit in both Canada and Australia. Irving for example writes that among Aberhart's followers in Alberta, Social Credit "took on the character of an eschatology, a prophetic vision for a divinely ordained

[17] *KH* 24.3.1936.
[18] *KH* 11.3.1938.
[19] *KH* 4.4.1938.

future for the world".[20] McCullagh's account of agrarian protest and the League of Rights in Australia makes reference to Social Credit's `apocalyptic' character and asserts that, "Social Credit, like the League does today, constantly reaffirmed the ideal values of Christian capitalist society."[21] Unfortunately McCullagh neither outlines these `ideal values' nor the `apocalyptic' character ascribed to Social Credit in Australia in the thirties. Instead, reference is made to the Canadian experience. Indeed the phrase, "constantly reaffirmed the ideals of Christian capitalist society," comes - without acknowledgement - from Irving's assessment of Social Credit in Alberta.[22] Could it be that the `apocalyptic' dimension of Social Credit was exclusively a Canadian phenomenon? Irving comments that in Alberta,

> the philosophy was presented within a context of Christian fundamentalism and Bible prophecy that remained quite foreign,and indeed incomprehensible,to the mind of Douglas.[23]

In Britain, as Finlay shows, Social Credit appealed to Christian socialists of an Anglo-Catholic persuasion and to a lesser extent to Catholic intellectuals, Quakers and Theosophists. Any interest among English evangelicals is

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[20] Irving 336.
[21] R.E.McCullagh, "Agrarian protest and the Australian League of Rights," unpublished B.A.(Hons) thesis, University of Queensland, 1972, 41.
[22] Irving 345.
[23] Irving 7.

unmentioned.[24] Noting the differences, Finlay offers no explanation.[25] Part of the answer may lie in the fact that Social Credit in England was attractive only to intellectuals, whereas in Alberta, as in Australia, it was much more of a mass movement.

In newspaper accounts of Social Credit meetings in the South Burnett in the thirties and newspaper correspondence from Social Credit supporters, the 'apocalyptic' dimension referred to by McCullagh is also absent, as is anti-Semitic prejudice. This does not mean these elements were not present, but that they have not surfaced in the searches undertaken. Therefore at this point, it is an open question as to whether Social Credit as it existed in the thirties in the South Burnett, or in Australia for that matter, had the 'apocalyptic' character of the Canadian movement. Premilennialism was far weaker in Australia than North America. Indeed, the particular set of historical circumstances surrounding the development of Social Credit in Alberta make it likely that a direct linkage of premillennial fundamentalism and Social Credit is restricted to Canada. Yet the social and economic environments in which fundamentalism and Social Credit flourish are similar. As we have already found, H.Richard Niebuhr for example considered fundamentalism to be a religious form of

[24] For a detailed analysis of Social Credit and religion in England see J.L.Finlay Chapter 10.
[25] Finlay 233.

agrarian populism.[26] Furthermore when the Social Credit philosophy re-emerges in the League of Rights in Australia after World War II, the religious dimensions are more overt. League director Eric Butler, reportedly an Anglican layman and sometime synodsman in the Diocese of Melbourne, published *Social Credit and Christian philosophy* in 1971 and *Releasing reality: Social Credit and the kingdom of God* in 1979 and the movement made sustained attempts to recruit clergy and laity to their cause.[27]

There is little evidence that Douglas was a either a fundamentalist or a premillennialist. His reference to Christ as "the Great Reformer"[28] and his distaste for Puritanism[29] confirm Irving's view that the theology espoused by William Aberhart would be beyond his comprehension. The mildly apocalyptic flavour of some of his writings carry a secularity far removed from classical pre-millenialism:

> There will probably come well within the lives of the present generation, a period at which the blind forces of destruction will appear in the ascendent. It does not seem to me to be necessary that this should be so, but it does seem to be probable.[30]

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[26] Niebuhr 184.
[27] K.D.Gott, *Voices of hate: a study of the Australian League of Rights and its director, Eric D. Butler* (Melbourne: Dissent Publishing Association, 1965) 26.
[28] C.H.Douglas, *Social Credit* (London: Cecil Palmer, 1924) 220.
[29] Douglas 220.
[30] Douglas 215.

Yet given that both pietism and revivalism - incipiently fundamentalist forms of religious life in Parker's typology - were characteristic of the religious culture of the South Burnett, it is useful to examine briefly how the churches in Alberta related to the Social Credit movement in the thirties. Moreover, it is interesting to observe similarities in the careers of William Aberhart and Joh Bjelke-Petersen. But first, what was the 'context of Christian fundamentalism and Bible prophecy', to which Irving refers?

Alberta Social Credit leader William Aberhart (1878-1943)[31] was a Calgary school principal who had first encountered pre-millenialism in the Presbyterian Church of his Ontario youth. In Ontario he had participated in and then conducted bible study classes on pre-millenialism, a practice he continued upon moving west to Alberta in 1910. Aberhart quarrelled with the Presbyterian Church, joined the Methodist Church, withdrew from the institutional church for a time and then joined the Westbourne Baptist Church in 1915. Within Westbourne, Aberhart founded the Calgary Prophetic Bible Conference in 1918. This was an interdenominational group which met to study pre-millenialism and it soon became a "strong, and spectacular religious institution."[32] The

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[31] The details of Aberhart's career are taken from Irving Chapter II.
[32] Irving 28.

Conference formed itself into the Calgary Prophetic Bible Institute in 1927.

The doctrinal basis of the Institute contained the classical formulations of fundamentalism, and of pre-millenialism. The Institute was opposed to modernism, higher criticism and evolution.[33] Irving concludes that the political success of Social Credit came from the fact that it was, "an extension of an already well-established fundamentalist and prophetic movement."[34] The influence of the Institute was extended beyond the city of Calgary by correspondence courses and Aberhart's weekly broadcast. So when he was converted to Social Credit in 1932, Aberhart already possessed a strong body of religious supporters.

How did the clergy of Alberta regard Social Credit? Evangelical clergy gave considerable support, much of it because they agreed with the religious foundations of the movement, as distinct from its political and economic philosophy. On the other hand, clergy of the United Church, a union church of Congregationalists, Methodists, and some Presbyterians formed in 1925, were attracted by the apparent rationalism of monetary reform. Many Social Credit study groups in Alberta were promoted by United Church clergy and laity.[35]

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[33] Irving 35.
[34] Irving 50.
[35] Irving 248-49.

There is no evidence to suggest that the clergy of the South Burnett were publicly supportive of Social Credit the way Albertan clergy were and thus the significance of Social Credit in the South Burnett is more political than religious. Perhaps the greatest difference between the Social Credit in Alberta and Australia was that the Australian movement lacked the charismatic, populist leadership of a William Aberhart. "It is doubtful if the movement would have won political power in Alberta without his leadership," Irving concludes.[36] However, there are parallels between Aberhart and the later career of Bjelke-Petersen. Aberhart, says Irving,

> ...had no hesitation in presenting Social Credit to Albertans as a Divine Plan for the salvation of society, the parallel in the economic sphere of the Divine Plan for the salvation of the individual. While such an approach infuriated many institutional religious and political leaders, it had a powerful attraction for thousands of people...
>
> Aberhart's presentation of Social Credit as a Divine Plan enabled him to insist that ultimate victory was inevitable; the cosmic forces were on his side...He was shrewd enough, however, not to rely entirely upon the Divine Plan for the cosmos; he also used extensively the secular appeal...
>
> His grammatical errors, although made unintentionally, served to increase [his] folksy appeal...[37]

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[36] Irving 337.
[37] Irving 337-339.

III.

Social Credit, with its agrarian base in the South Burnett and elsewhere, was an element of what Margaret Cribb has described as `rural fundamentalism´. This rural fundamentalism which holds that, "all that is worthy and useful in morality, religion, societal values and the economy stems from the land and its usage,"[38] is one of the keys to understanding the political culture of Queensland. Cribb was not speaking about a religious phenomenon, yet is clearly describing a belief system which goes beyond political ideology and encompasses if not the whole of life, then at least morality, religion, social values and economics. By some definitions it could be termed a religion. Ferre, for example, says,"One´s religion...is one´s way of valuing most intensively and comprehensively."[39] Even if this `rural fundamentalism´ is not a religion, it certainly received succour in the South Burnett from the churches in the thirties. Funerals of the faithful departed, anniversaries, church openings, welcomes and farewells to clergy all provided opportunities for the community through both its clergy and laity, to publicly count its blessings and extol the virtues of both the land and its people.

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[38] Cribb, "The Games" 50-51.
[39] F.Ferre, "The definition of religion," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 38.1 (1970): 11.

On such occasions, the pioneering individualism of their forebears was lauded and the young encouraged into the ways of good citizenship. At a service commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Church of England in Kingaroy, the Rev A.E.Taylor told his congregation, "to render thanks to Almighty God for those early pioneers who visualized the growth of that wonderful district".[40] The obituary of F.A.F. Schilling, one of the Lutheran pioneers at Edenvale, recalled that, "he endured many hardships, but being of a sturdy an tenacious nature, he won through and proved successful in his adventures,"[41] his life an example of the `peculiar tenacity´ which forms Mayer´s "essential Lutheran character."[42]

For the young, being in employment was more important than being educated. J.C.Egan, a Catholic layman and principal of the Kingaroy High School, told the school speech night in 1936 that:

> ...he considered an education to Junior standard sufficient to fit one to set out to earn a living. There was no advantage in a pupil remaining at school to reach senior standard if by doing so, he missed the opportunity of employment. He was pleased to see the past students obtaining positions in their own towns. He looked upon the Public Service as the graveyard of ambition.[43]

Egan, styled without apparent consciousness of the irony, `Mr J.C.Egan B.A.´ by the local newspaper, did not

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[40] *KH* 30.9.1935.
[41] *KH* 5.7.1937.
[42] Voight 184.
[43] *KH* 7.12.1936.

seemingly recognize that he spoke as an educated man, employed in the public service!

Employment was more important than education because progress and prosperity came through hard work. Hill, the Methodist circuit steward, reminded the semi-jubilee of Methodism in the district that,"they owed a deep debt of gratitude to those old pioneers...They today were really reaping the benefit of their labours in more than one way."[44] The Rev C.C.Truman told his fellow Methodists at an anniversary celebration in 1932 that,"The anniversary should only be the vantage ground from which they should undertake earnest and diligent work and greater progress."[45]

The days when Kingaroy was on the frontier of settlement were celebrated. When Joh Bjelke-Petersen's material grandmother Agneta Poulsen died in 1936, her obituary recorded how, in the early days of settlement at Taabinga:

> the Aborigines were plentiful and many a night the family could here their wild corroboree being held on the Village camping place to the nightly accompaniment of the dingoes (sic) serenade.[46]

The place of hard times in the scheme of things was recognized, and rationalized. Circuit steward Hill commented at a Methodist anniversary celebration in the

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[44] *KH* 26.5.1933.
[45] *KH* 7.10.1032.
[46] *KH* 16.3.1936.

midst of the Depression that,"in times of prosperity they were liable to forget God, and it was a good thing to see people getting back to God."[47] The idea that prosperity was normative and that hard times were a punishment from the Almighty for unfaithfulness was spelled out more specifically by a pastor from the Lockyer Valley parish of Ropeley, Pastor G.O.Minge at the annual ELSA district synod meeting in 1933, held at Oakey on the nearby Darling Downs. In a paper entitled "Hard Times", Minge argued that,"hard times came as a punishment of the unbeliever and as a chastening of the believer."[48] However,

> Christians were reminded of the promise of God, `Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you´ and were therefore urged to put their trust in their Saviour, and were assured he would not forsake them on their earthly pilgrimage."[49]

Piety leads to prosperity, Minge is assuring listeners; his fellow pastors and laity predominantly from rural areas contending with economic conditions beyond their control.

Anglican priest A.E.Taylor offered this same mixture of pietism with the promise of prosperity in a sermon commemorating the Anglican church´s 25th anniversary in 1935:

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[47] *KH* 7.10.1932.
[48] *KH* 2.10.1933.
[49] *KH* 2.10.1933.

> "...shut out the world and all worldly thoughts...and think only of the great God who continued to bestow his blessings upon them. They had witnessed the wonderful love of God...through the gifts God had bestowed upon them in that district; for God had given them a glorious heritage...[50]

The progress of the church and the progress of the district were inseparably linked. Methodist Connexional Secretary A.A. Mills - who pioneered the Methodist cause in Kingaroy - opened extensions to the Kingaroy Methodist Church in 1938 saying,

> ... he knew of no town in Queensland that had grown to the same extent as Kingaroy and he was pleased to know that the Church had kept pace with the times and growth of the town.[51]

The strongest exponents of such attitudes in the South Burnett appear to be the churches. At most civic functions, political meetings or gatherings of community organizations such as the Show Society, or rural producer groups such as the peanut farmers, the kind of rhetoric quoted above was largely absent. However, within the churches, it was not just the laity such as Hill and Smallbone who had lived and worked in the South Burnett all their lives who were the purveyors of these doctrines, but clergy who lived in the district anything from a few years to two decades before they were called, stationed or appointed elsewhere, as well as visiting ecclesiastical dignitaries like Archbishop Duhig, and the

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[50] *KH* 30.9.1935.
[51] *KH* 24.11.1938.

various district chairmen, presidents and moderators of the Protestant churches.

In Kingaroy to open a new Catholic Presbytery in 1933 Archbishop James Duhig said that:

> In all his experience of 28 years travel, he had never seen anything that had been a greater revelation to him than the South Burnett. The Darling Downs were well known...but in Kingaroy they had in that wonderful district, mostly virgin soil and they could see from the main road, smiling farms. Almighty God had given them a wonderful heritage there. He hoped they would value it, and that He would continue His blessings to them.[52]

Amid drought in the previous year, the Rev C.C. Truman, Chairman of the Wide Bay-Burnett district for the Methodist Church told a civic welcome for a visiting Methodist Conference President:

> They in the Kingaroy district were a very fortunate people in having such a great district. That reminded that God was in in Heaven and all was right with Kingaroy.[53]

Although a survey of every rural community in Queensland is beyond the scope of this study, it seems that if church leaders made similar comments in every rural area they visited, then these notions were well propagated across the state. For it is far too complex a set of ideas to be sustained simply by the speeches of itinerant ecclesiastics, but how ironic for their successors during

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[52] *KH* 1.12.1933.
[52] *KH* 3.10.1932.

Bjelke-Petersen's premiership if they were among its primary progenitors.

Whether it was in response to this `prosperity theology', as we may term it, is unclear but the thirties saw a further strengthening of the fabric of church life in the Kingaroy district. The raising of the Presbyterian congregation to `sanctioned status' with its own full time minister; the construction of a new Methodist church, a Presbyterian manse and a Catholic presbytery; the construction of a new Lutheran church in the town; extensions to the Church of Christ chapel, and a Church of Christ manse; some energetic and vigorous ministries by Phillips, Watts, Payne, and Schmidt; and the establishment of a number of childrens' and youth organizations to provide spiritual, and more importantly, moral training - these are all evidence of a strengthening church life.

Yet the Roman Catholics are somewhat peripheral to all this. Numerically, they constituted less than fifteen percent of the population according to the 1933 Census, while the evangelical alliance of Presbyterians, Methodists, Churches of Christ and Lutherans numbered over 35%; the Methodists alone were numerically greater than the Catholics.[54] The Roman Catholics did not acknowledge any want of numbers and nor did they feel it

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[54] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 1933 Census.

necessary, as the Lutherans did, to constantly reaffirm their loyalty to the British Crown. A Hibernian Society breakfast in 1932, attended by Duhig, concluded with the singing of "God Save Ireland".[55]

In the wake of economic depression this expansion of the churches may be surprising. Yet in this expansion, and more particularly in the rise of anti-communism, Kingaroy in the thirties foreshadows some wider trends of the nineteen fifties.

The thirties was also the decade which saw the generation who pioneered the district - as distinct from the generation which pioneered the town - passing away: Agneta Poulsen, F.A.F.Schilling and Arthur Youngman were but three.[56] The frontier was well and truly closed; the land half won. Joh Bjelke-Petersen spent much of the decade clearing and working the land, spending only a small amount of his time during the thirties in church activities; and none on political activities.

But Kingaroy in the thirties was the religious and political environment in which Bjelke-Petersen lived and worked before entering politics. It was also a milieu in which the prosperity of the land was regarded not as an act of God's grace falling like the rain on the just and the unjust alike, but as a sign of divine favour upon

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[55] *KH* 20.5.1932.
[56] *KH* 18.10.1935; 16.3.1936; 5.7.1937.

faithful, holy and loyal people; a milieu which venerated the pioneering individualism and hard work of the early settlers whose occupation of the land before the turn of the century marked the closing of yet another tract of the Queensland frontier. Together, these values of holiness and hard work, faithfulness and loyalty, might be said to constitute a form of the protestant work ethic.

All these elements - piety, populism and the protestant work ethic - find *political* expression in philosophical terms, in policy terms, and in terms of a vote-attracting political strategy when Bjelke-Petersen emerges in 1968 as premier of Queensland. Their impact lies not only in their personification by Bjelke-Petersen, but in the fact that they were the shared experience of the entire community. Indeed by the evidence of Bjelke-Petersen's electoral success, they were shared by an entire class, even a generation, of Queenslanders with deep roots in the religious culture of Queensland back into the nineteenth century. How then did the paragon of this generation, a pious and poor but hardworking, immigrant farmboy from the South Burnett ascend to the highest elective office in the state?

CHAPTER 9.

FROM LAY PREACHER'S PULPIT TO PARLIAMENT'S BACKBENCH

> His life's work has been on the land, which still holds a big attraction for him...Latest product of his initiative and progressiveness was his purchase of a bulldozer for contract clearing.
>
> Country Party plebiscite biography of Joh Bjelke-Petersen, 1946.[1]

> Having money, property, honor, power, land and servants belongs to the secular realm; without these it could not endure. Therefore a lord or prince should not and cannot be poor, because for his office and station he must have all sorts of goods like these.
>
> Martin Luther.[2]

I.

In the thirties, it was the peanut industry which enabled the impoverished Bjelke-Petersen family to achieve some financial security. However, the family's first involvement with peanut growing was not very successful. At the inaugural Kingaroy Peanut Festival in 1959 Joh Bjelke-Petersen told how,

> Before 1900 my grandfather planted a small patch of what was then known as Chinamen's nuts. Not realizing how to harvest them, he pulled them up when the bushes were dead, leaving most of the nuts in the ground, all of which came up the following year, much to his concern. He felt that they were likely to become a pest and take possession of his small area of cultivation, so he could not risk

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[1] *KH* 3.10.1946.

[2] Martin Luther, "Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount," *Luther's Works* 21:12.

> planting them any more. However, he never lived to see the advent of the peanut industry, and what it has come to mean to the district.[3]

It was not until after World War I that the peanut industry developed in the South Burnett when the Young brothers and B.J.Johansen began growing peanuts at Memerambi about 1920.[4] The industry expanded quickly and by 1928, some 11,500 acres were under cultivation. The growers moved to establish a Peanut Marketing Board and W.Muir, J.Nolan and C.F.Adermann were appointed to approach the state (Labor) government about the establishment of a board. Commodity boards were a form of agrarian socialism on which there was bi-partisan agreement between the Australian Labor Party and the Country Party, then in its first decade of political existence. In 1927, the peanut growers formed a Co-operative Association, and in the following year the first peanut silo was erected in Kingaroy. It was not until the industry had been established for well over a decade that Bjelke-Petersen became involved. In 1934, at the age of 23, he commenced contract peanut threshing. Three years later he received a patent for the peanut threshing machine he had developed with a partner.

For nearly three decades, from 1934 until he became a Cabinet Minister in 1963, Bjelke-Petersen engaged in a

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[3] *KH* 12.2.1959.
[4] J.R.Laverty, "The peanut industry in Queensland," unpublished B.A. thesis, University of Queensland, 1952: 17.

variety of commercial pursuits based on primary industries. In 1944 he gave up peanut threshing - mainly because peanut dust was affecting his lungs [5]- and turned to contract scrub pulling using World War II army surplus bulldozers. Much of the scrub he pulled was brigalow in south western and central Queensland; first around Meandarra and Glenmorgan, and then at Surat, Biloela, and Thangool.[6] He continued to run the business after entering parliament, and in 1952 he attempted larger scale clearing of the brigalow scrub by chemical poisoning from the air, using the chemical 245T.[7] This was unsuccessful, and he then turned to crop-dusting on the Darling Downs. In 1963, shortly before his appointment to Cabinet he sold the crop spraying business to ACF & Shirleys. The *Kingaroy Herald* reported at the time:

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[5] J.Bjelke-Petersen 34.

[6] J.Bjelke-Petersen 36. Approximately 14 million acres of Queensland are estimated to have been originally vegetated with brigalow scrub, a form of acacia. In the thirties, brigalow was described as, "Next to the prickly-pear... the greatest obstruction to settlement in Southern Queensland," E. and R.S.Hirschfeld, "Concerning the brigalow," *Queensland Agricultural Journal* 49 (1938): 334. Growing in an area with an average annual rainfall rarely less than 20", the brigalow scrub supported relatively fertile soils. However, clearing of the scrub was difficult and thus capital intensive. The Commonwealth and Queensland Governments therefore sponsored a large scheme for making the brigalow lands productive since World War II.
See also S.H.Pearse, "The origin of the brigalow scheme," unpublished B.Econ thesis, University of Queensland, 1966 and a special `brigalow edition' of the *Queensland Agricultural Journal* 88.12 (December 1962).

[7] J.Bjelke-Petersen 39.

> "Mrs [Florence Bjelke-] Petersen confirmed a report that her husband had disposed of his crop spraying business to ACF & Shirley Fertilizers and that 4 aeroplanes were involved in the deal. Mrs Petersen said that during his ten year career as a crop sprayer her husband had lost 16 planes in crashes. "So you can see the job wasn't all profit," she said.[8]

Nor was his next business enterprise all profit. During the fifties Bjelke-Petersen became involved in mineral prospecting. He not only took up shares in oil prospecting companies,[9] but was actively engaged in a prospecting syndicate which drilled for oil at Cape Hillsborough, north of Mackay, near the Great Barrier Reef.[10] Later, in 1958 Bjelke-Petersen acquired an Authority To Prospect over some 57,900 square miles in the Hughenden area which laid the foundations for his subsequent investments in mining and prospecting companies such as Exoil, Oilmin and Artesian Basin Oil.[11] Unopposed at the 1953 and 1956 state elections, and the owner of a fleet of aircraft between 1953 and 1963, he had time to fly the state searching for oil, and became an unabashed advocate of the oil and mining

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[8] *KH* 3.10.1963.
[9] J.Bjelke-Petersen 67, and Communist Party of Australia Queensland State Committee, *Under investigation. The business empire of Joh Bjelke-Petersen*, 2nd edn., (Brisbane, 1976) 8 and 16-17.
[10] J.Bjelke-Petersen 66.
[11] J.Bjelke-Petersen 66 and Bjelke-Petersen v. Federal Commissioner of Taxation 1963, *Aldine Australian Law Reports* 25: 24, and Communist Party of Australia above. Bjelke-Petersen's shareholding in these companies were the subject of allegations of conflict of interest during his premiership.

industries in parliament. In debate on the Petroleum Acts Amendment Bill in 1955, he told parliament:

> ...we all hope that drilling will reveal the presence of profitable oil-bearing areas in the State... we want everyone who is able to contribute to the search to engage in it...
>
> Mr. F.E.Roberts: Do you call it a field of investigation or a sphere of gambling?
>
> Mr. BJELKE PETERSEN: A sphere of investigation because much research, capital and hard work must be put into it. Perhaps there is also some risk or speculation.
>
> Mr. Aitkins: Why not wipe out the speculators and market riggers first?
>
> Mr. BJELKE PETERSEN: That is quite a different side of the question and I am not prepared to discuss it at the moment. From my association with this search I think the Government are still lacking.[12]

In the 1963 state election campaign - after two terms in government - he was still critical of what he regarded as the Labor Party's tardiness in developing Weipa.[13] After he became premier, his wife, Florence accepted shares in Comalco, the mining company developing the Weipa bauxite deposit.[14] So Bjelke-Petersen promoted large scale mineral developments, just as he promoted large scale clearing of the land.

> I am still of the the opinion that in the lands of the State we have far greater potentialities for the production of wealth than we have in our secondary industries....the Government should do much more to encourage land development. I am thinking...of the heavily timbered parts of the State which are not

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[12] *QPD* 212 (14.9.1955):323.
[13] *KH* 16.5.1963.
[14] Brisbane *Telegraph*, 6.10.1970; *Bulletin*, 6.4.1974.

> being developed to anything like the extent they should be.[15]

So passionate was he about clearing the land, that he, the great advocate of free enterprise, told parliament in 1958 that the State should pay farmers for land clearing, that,

> where development had taken place, and where land has been cleared of heavy timber, it is only fair that just compensation should be paid for the clearing.[16]

However, all these business activities: scrub pulling, crop dusting and oil drilling, have potentially destructive effects on the environment. But do they reflect a particularly Protestant notion of the relationship between the elements of the created order: that of dominion, as given by God to Adam in Genesis 1:26?

For Martin Luther, the qualities of intellect, memory and will made man superior to the rest of the created order.

> If all of these qualities are combined, do they not make up and produce the sort of man in whom you would think the image of God is reflected, especially when you add the rule over the creatures?[17]

Though he recognized that the ability to exercise fully this dominion was inhibited by the Fall, and that "what we achieve, is brought about, not by the dominion which

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[15] *QPD* 210 (4.11.1954):1179.
[16] *KH* 6.11.1958.
[17] Martin Luther, "Lectures on Genesis 1-5," *Luther's Works* 1: 63-4.

Adam had but through industry and skill,"[18] Luther still argued that, "even if the dominion has been almost entirely lost, it is still a great blessing that some remnants of it are in existence today".[19]

Adam, in his exercise of dominion, wrote Luther, "could command a lion with a single word. And he was free to cultivate the soil to produce what he wished."[20] Consonant with Luther, Bjelke-Petersen spoke of the "wonderful advantage and privilege of tilling virgin soil"[21] almost as if it was a sacred responsibility to chop down the trees to till the virgin soil.

In the nineteen forties, the peanut threshing and scrub pulling businesses became successful enough for Bjelke-Petersen to contemplate involvement in politics.

In 1946, still a Lutheran lay preacher, Bjelke-Petersen was nominated for, and elected unopposed to, the Kingaroy Shire Council after another prospective candidate pulled out. Bjelke-Petersen was absent from the first meeting of the newly-elected Council, but appointed *in absentia* to the General Purposes Committee and the School of Arts Committee.[22] In the light of his unsuccessful attempt in the 1944 Country Party plebiscite for the seat of Nanango, Bjelke-Petersen's participation in local

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[18] Luther 1:67.
[19] Luther 1:133.
[20] Luther 1:64.
[21] *QPD* 201 (20.9.1951): 418.
[22] *KH* 16.5.1946.

government was probably simply a stepping stone to higher things. Later that year in a poll of Kingaroy's twenty most prominent men in `civic and local affairs' Bjelke-Petersen rated 12th after the local MHR, MLA and other shire councillors.[23]

In July 1946, shortly after Bjelke-Petersen's election to the Kingaroy Shire Council unopposed, J.B.Edwards announced his retirement from the seat of Nanango. His son, P.B.Edwards, a 37 year old farmer recently returned from five years of war service in the RAAF announced his intention to contest the Country Party plebiscite.[24] Charles Adermann suggested to Bjelke-Petersen that he nominate.

II.

The other plebiscite candidates for the seat which the ruling Labor Party had hopes of winning with the retirement of the sitting member were 37 year old Wondai chemist, J.K.Brownlee, with no war record, and R.E. Ellwood, a soldier settler who had fought in the Light Horse in World War I and served as an officer in the AIF in World War II.[25] War records, or lack of them, were to play an important part in the campaign. The plebiscite biography, which offers a picture of Joh Bjelke-Petersen as he would like others to see him, describes him as a

[23] *KH* 1.8.1946.
[24] *KH* 25.7.1946.
[25] *KH* 8.8.1946.

"Kingaroy Shire Councillor, farmer and contractor." His educational background is described thus:

> . . . educated at Taabinga Village State School for a number of years. . . complemented by correspondence and private study in history, secretarial practice, English, essay writing, public speaking and debating.[26]

No mention was made that he failed the school leaving examination, known as the Scholarship Examination.[27] However, in fairness, his childhood polio undoubtedly had an effect on his school progress.

Nor is there any mention of his religion, or of his active involvement in the life of the local Lutheran Church. The newspaper records indicate that he was listed in the church notices as the lay preacher for Taabinga and Home Creek in October 1946.[28]

Given that in the post-war environment Lutheranism - as a major religion of the recently defeated Nazi Germany - was probably suspect, this is understandable. On the other hand, as a good Lutheran, he may have regarded his involvement in the church as irrelevant to public life. But in an address to plebiscite voters, he urged, "the cultivation of a British outlook," insisting that Australia was not pioneered by any "isms", but because,

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[26] *KH* 8.8.1946.
[27] J.Bjelke-Petersen 18.
[28] *KH* 10.10.1946.

"we have enjoyed a certain freedom and liberty as part of the British Commonwealth of Nations."[29]

His plebiscite biography stated that,

> His life's work has been on the land, which still holds a big attraction for him. . . Latest product of his initiative and progressiveness was his purchase of a bulldozer for contract clearing.[30]

This no doubt was an appeal to the traditional Country party constituency. But he also pitched for the votes of the town dwellers, with the line that "His public interests are both town and country," and that he was vice-president of the Kingaroy Chamber of Commerce.[31] He also argued against the 40 hour week, government social security benefits and for increased amenities for rural dwellers.[32]

Unlike the plebiscite he had unsuccessfully contested against J.B.Edwards in 1944, Bjelke-Petersen won the 1946 plebiscite by a margin of 94 of the 999 votes cast in the first past the post contest with 398 votes. P.B.Edwards came in second with 304 votes. Ellwood and Brownlee trailed behind with 170 and 127 votes each.[33] Bjelke-Petersen's work during the war as an organizer for the Country Party paid off.

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[29] *KH* 3.10.1946.
[30] *KH* 3.10.1946.
[31] *KH* 8.8.1946.
[32] *KH* 3.10.1946.
[33] *KH* 7.11.1946.

But there was an immediate outcry from Edwards' supporters, and they focused on Bjelke-Petersen's war record. Using the quaint practice of a *nom de plume*, "Ex-AIF" wrote: "It is inconceivable that . . . voters. . . scrubbed the returned soldier candidates else I, also, may have remained on the 'food front' for personal gain." "Ex-AIF" accused plebiscite voters of allowing themselves to be "bulldozed in their voting," no doubt a reference to Bjelke-Petersen's latest contracting venture. The writer concluded:

> I venture. . . that had this plebiscite taken place in 1942, when electors in this area were fearing an indescribable foreign invasion, the result would have been vastly different.[34]

Two further letters followed, one arguing that whoever the voters choose a politician always gets in, and another urging Edwards to stand as an independent, which he did. A Bjelke-Petersen supporter, writing under the *nom de plume* of "Play the Game," decried Edwards' attempt to split the Party, and described Joh Bjelke-Petersen as "a young man of unquestioned ability and undoubted integrity."[35]

Another correspondent, soldier settler H.H.Templeton wrote that he had resigned from the Country Party because of its lack of sympathy for returned soldiers. He also made the unsubstantiated assertion that, "What I have

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[34] *KH* 14.11.1946.
[35] *KH* 5.12.1946.

seen of plebiscites is they were not always honestly taken."[36]

The question of Joh Bjelke-Petersen's participation in World War II has often been raised by his political opponents.[37] The answer to the question of what Bjelke-Petersen did during the war is simple. As a farmer, his was a reserved occupation and moreover, his childhood polio was likely render him unfit for military service.[38] However, this did not stop him from engaging in the patriotic and profitable work of civil contracting for the military. He was involved in the construction of Kingaroy airfield, as well as working actively for the Country Party. In 1944 he challenged the long term sitting MLA, J.B.Edwards for preselection. . . and lost. The primary vote was 325 for Edwards; 275 for Bjelke-Petersen. After the distribution of preferences the result was 427 for Edwards and 320 for Bjelke-Petersen.[39] So the man who was later to defy the electoral odds in Queensland politics lost his first political contest.

More public debate over Bjelke-Petersen's war record and the 1046 plebiscite was to follow. Through it all candidate Bjelke-Petersen stood publicly aloof from the Party infighting which brought further allegations of a

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[36] *KH* 23.1.1947.
[37] *CM* 13.9.1985.
[38] *CM* 21.9.1985. Cf. J.Bjelke-Petersen 33.
[39] *KH* 10.2.1944.

long running Bjelke-Petersen plan to gain control of the branch and a subsequently rigged plebiscite; the intervention of Nicklin in support of Bjelke-Petersen; [40] and the expulsion of P.B.Edwards from the Country Party for standing against an endorsed candidate.[41] Edwards claimed, "continued agitation especially among Country Party stalwarts over the plebiscite outcome," but the endorsed candidate denied any knowledge of agitation.[42] Bjelke-Petersen's only other reported public statement on the infighting came late in the campaign when he announced, "I agree with Mr Edwards that we leave the issue with the electors and am confident of the result".[43]

Bjelke-Petersen had good reason to be confident. Supported by the party machine, by federal member and fellow Kingaroy resident Charles Adermann, Bjelke-Petersen ran a very well organized campaign, starting at Wondai on April 1, 1947. Among Bjelke-Petersen's political associates and supporters in the Country Party were other Protestant laymen from the district who shared his worldview. In addition to Adermann they included Harry Hoggart, chairman of the Nanango Electorate Council who was at that time was churchwarden at the Maidenwell Church of England and George Logan, sometime Clerk of the

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[40] *KH* 24.4.1947.
[41] *KH* 27.3.1947.
[42] *KH* 23.3.1947.
[43] *KH* 1.5.1947.

Presbyterian Kirk Session who was an unsuccessful candidate, along with Bjelke-Petersen in the 1944 plebiscite against J.B.Edwards. But the most influential was Adermann.

III.

Charles Frederick Adermann (1886-1979) moved to Kingaroy district when he was 'very young' and left school before completing his primary education. The Kingaroy Church of Christ began meeting in his parents' home in 1909 and as an indication of his piety he was baptized, "at the early age of 13", apparently unusual in a denomination which adhered to the principle of adult baptism.[44] In 1924, aged 28, he became chairman of Peanut Board a position he held until 1952. In 1939 he became Chairman of Kingaroy Shire 1939, where he remained for two terms, until 1946. In 1939 he also became one of the founders of local radio station 4SB, remaining chairman until his death in 1979. Like Bjelke-Petersen, he was involved in Sunday school teaching, conducting the 4SB Radio Sunday School under the *nom de plume* of Uncle John for over 40 years. In 1943 he was elected Country Party member for the Federal seat of Maranoa, narrowly defeating the lacklustre Labor incumbent.

With his election came questions from peanut growers as to whether he could effectively combine his chairmanship

[44] Haigh 257.

of the Peanut Board with his arduous parliamentary responsibilities. At a meeting of growers to discuss the issue, Adermann's arguments included the fact that, "his parliamentary salary was dipped into heavily by taxation, otherwise he would forfeit the Board's allowance."[45] Bjelke-Petersen marshalled support behind Adermann, spoke in his defence and moved the successful resolution that Adermann retain the chairmanship. It is doubtful today if public opinion would permit a newly elected Country Party MP to remain chairman of a major commodity board. Thirty-two year old Joh Bjelke-Petersen certainly had no doubts.[46]

In 1948 an electoral redistribution moved much of the area into the electorate of Fisher. Adermann switched to Fisher, and held the seat until his retirement in 1972. In 1958 Menzies appointed him Minister for Primary Industries and he held that portfolio until relinquishing it in 1967, being knighted in 1971. He was president of both the Queensland and Federal Conferences of the Church of Christ.[47]

During Bjelke-Petersen's early years in politics Adermann, who was fifteen years older, spent a great deal

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[45] *KH* 21.10.1943.
[46] One of Nicklin's first acts as premier was to insist that Country Party Ministers resign from other public offices to avoid conflict of interest. Political Chronicle, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 3.2 (May 1958): 239. Cf. J.Bjelke-Petersen 65.
[47] Haigh 257.

of time with Bjelke-Petersen. They frequently appeared together as the local and federal member; they supported each other in electoral campaigns; they were both peanut farmers; both Country Party activists and both adherents of a religious tradition that was pietistic in practice and congregationalist in polity. Adermann differed from Bjelke-Petersen in that he had a vision of the church beyond the local congregation, as evidenced by his participation in the state and national church. It is open to conjecture how Bjelke-Petersen's relationship with the churches would have been during his premiership had Lutheran polity been sufficiently flexible to allow a similar level of lay participation beyond the local congregation.

IV.

In his opening speech of the campaign, Bjelke-Petersen took up issues that would become central to his political philosophy and political career. First, the importance of national development. "A better standard of living and increasing leisure for all demand hard and efficient work by all could well be made a national slogan," he said.[48] Secondly, the link between communism and the Australian Labor Party.

> Considering that the Communist Party is today a highly organized political machine, with apparently unlimited financial resources and mounting political power. . . we realize that any support given to

[48] *KH* 3.4.1947.

> Labor members makes it possible for these real agitators to entrench themselves. . . [49]

More specifically he attacked the Labor Government's proposed introduction of the 40 hour week. Thirdly, he noted Labor's lack of sympathy for primary producers, but he also touched on a theme to be restated more strongly in his maiden speech in Parliament. He said:

> While the Country Party recognizes the need for Government planning for specific purposes, it could not . . . too strongly be affirmed that the lifeblood of production and trade would still be initiative, resourcefulness and courage of individuals and groups.[50]

It is the first clause about the role of government that is significant. Finally he spoke of coalition with the forerunner of the Liberal Party, the Queensland Peoples Party (QPP), "because we know that the QPP stands for the same fundamental principles, acknowledging the rights and freedom of the individual."[51]

The first candidate to launch his campaign, he conducted an extensive series of meeting across the electorate, backed up by press advertisements in the *Kingaroy Herald*. He also used the medium of radio. His first election talk was somewhat enigmatically entitled, "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity," the slogan of the French Revolution! His

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[49] *KH* 3.4.1947.
[50] *KH* 3.4.1947.
[51] *KH* 3.4.1947.

second talk was more conventionally entitled "Strike Leaders versus the People."[52]

In his campaign launch, the expelled Edwards launched a strong personal attack on Bjelke-Petersen saying:

> . . . during the war years, when almost everyone was too busy with the affairs of war to take much interest in political activity, Mr Bjelke-Petersen found time to take the secretaryship of the Country Party organization, and though he had been a resident of the district for many years, and was never previously known to take any interest in the Country Party, he became a very ardent organizer. He was successful in including many members in the organization, not because they were, or ever had been Country Party supporters, but because they would be Bjelke-Petersen supporters. . . the great majority of solid Country Party members were unaware that during the past six years continued efforts had been made to dislodge Mr J.B.Edwards. . . [53]

Country Party Nanango Electoral Council Chairman Harry Hoggart replied, arguing a clean, fair plebiscite and praising Joh Bjelke-Petersen for fully supporting the endorsed candidate and the party organization after he had lost the 1944 plebiscite.[54] Edwards' response was to reassert his claim that Bjelke-Petersen had stacked the branch, and he commented that Bjelke-Petersen conducted house to house canvassing for the plebiscite, "thereby upsetting the democratic principle of the plebiscite."[55] Allegations of the rigged plebiscite aside, the reality was that Joh Bjelke-Petersen had organized the numbers, and that Edwards, away at the war,

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[52] *KH* 3.4.1947.
[53] *KH* 10.4.1947.
[54] *KH* 17.4.1946.
[55] *KH* 17.4.1947.

expected to succeed to his father's seat with ease. Instead, he was beaten by superior numbers, both in the plebiscite and the election.

Five candidates contested the election. Bjelke-Petersen, Edwards, S.Andrewartha, a Blackbutt railwayman, who claimed to be Independent Labor; D.N.Carroll, a Kingaroy solicitor and farmer, the endorsed Labor candidate who had also contested the seat against Edwards in the 1944 election, and P.J.K.Cameron, a Brisbane journalist representing a group described as "Frank Barnes Labor". Bjelke-Petersen topped the poll with 3733 votes; the two Labor candidates polled second and third, with the Frank Barnes Labor candidate from Brisbane polling 2164 votes to the endorsed Labor candidate's 2028. Next came Edwards with 753 votes and Andrewartha with 202. 82 votes were informal. Ironically the combined totals of the Labor candidates was 525 votes greater than the successful candidate's total.[56] Had Labor not been so factionalized, and run only one candidate, the result, and perhaps Queensland political history may have been different.

Upon his election as the state MLA, the Shire Council President congratulated Bjelke-Petersen with an unintended irony saying, "I hope the little he has

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[56] *KH* 29.5.1947.

learned here will help him materially in the big job he has ahead of him."[57]

V.

Bjelke-Petersen's maiden speech in the Queensland Parliament on an August afternoon in 1947 reflected the concerns of his country constituency, yet also contained the seeds of many of his later policies. Right at the beginning there is a sense that Joh Bjelke-Petersen considered himself something of an outsider in political life. His second sentence to the Parliament perhaps foreshadowed the political maverick he was later to become. "My outlook may be different from that of many of the honourable members present," he said.[58] Could it have been that his dour Danish Lutheranism sat uneasily with the less inhibited Irish Catholicism of the governing Labor Party; a party which had grown fat on the fruits of office it had enjoyed almost continuously since 1915?

However, the major theme of the new Member for Nanango was not puritanism, but economic development. In a speech which reads as if it was prepared for an evening at the Kingaroy Debating Society, a number of the issues raised would not be out of place in a contemporary debate on the state of the Australian economy:

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[57] *KH* 29.5.1947.
[58] *QPD* 190 (21.8.1947): 127.

> Australia has wonderful opportunities for obtaining markets . . . for primary industries . . . and for secondary industries. We should lose no time in rapidly expanding our production in order to seize the opportunities offered on the markets of the world. . . . [I]f we had no exportable wealth, the living conditions not only of the producer but of the city dweller would be seriously affected.
>
> Speaking generally however, most people are looking for peace and security in which to enjoy the fruits of their labour. To achieve this we all realize that industry in Australia today requires a fresh spirit, a finer vision, a greater objective. To fall back to the attitude of pre-war days and little enterprise would mean a certain loss of that for which the sacrifice of war has been made. In brief, it is a problem of state and national efficiency.[58]

It was no doubt the rhetoric of the fresh spirit, the finer vision and the greater objective which caught the attention of *Telegraph* political commentator Henry Pellew who wrote that,

> A knight in shining amour has arisen in Parliament. He is Mr Bjelke-Petersen the new Country Party member for Nanango. Legislative Assembly cynics listened skeptically when the new member delivered what must have been one of the most idealistic speeches heard in the Chamber.[60]

But back home in the South Burnett, Bjelke-Petersen refuted the tag of "idealism". "He maintained," said the *Kingaroy Herald*, "that he was essentially a practical man."[61] The reason for his disclaimer of idealism was probably that such a tag was inconsistent with his view of himself as a self made man. Many voters in the Nanango electorate perceived themselves the same way.

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[58] *QPD* 190 (21.8.1947): 127.
[60] *KH* 4.9.1947.
[61] *KH* 4.9.1947.

The next matter addressed by the new member in his maiden speech was the campaign for shorter working hours, which he rejected saying,

> . . . it is not in the interests of the people to shorten the hours of production, but rather we should seek to establish our economic position while the time is opportune. Greater leisure is of no benefit unless we have things whereby to use it properly and to the full.[62]

This theme of opposition to shorter working hours and indeed, improved conditions for wage and salary earners, was to recur throughout the rest of his political career.

Finally, the South Burnett's new parliamentary representative discussed the respective roles of government and private enterprise in economic development:

> I feel every possible encouragement should be given to private initiative and enterprise, to the people who are prepared to undertake development subject to the test of profit and loss, and that we should use state investment, apart from indispensable national works and services, as a balancing factor where private enterprise does not fully cover the field. . . . Such a policy will. . . lead to the material welfare of a nation and a more rapid rate of progress. . . than a policy to. . . limit and discourage private enterprise. Therefore state policy must create and give opportunity to capital to play its part. . . [63]

There are two significant things about this section of the speech. First, Joh Bjelke-Petersen is advocating a broader role for government than "the provision of indispensable national works and services," arguing that

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[62] *QPD* 190 (21.8.1947) 128.
[63] *QPD* 190 (21.8.1947) 128.

government must step in to facilitate the operations of capital, and in fact perform the functions of capital where capital itself "does not fully cover the field". This proposition may be called entrepreneurial government; or does it in fact owe its origins to the corporate state model of economic development? Secondly, whatever its origins, it is a principle that during his premiership, Joh Bjelke-Petersen made an integral part of his strategy for the economic development of Queensland.

CHAPTER 10

POWERFUL FORCES AT WORK

> We pay particular attention to the work of the early settlers and give them honour... We thank God for the example of the Christian home, which these pioneers made in this fertile land ...
>
> Here we ...give thought to their courage, independence, spirit and fortune in these days... But if we remember them, their work and example and if we carry on this spirit of self help, their independence and their ways of helping one another, we have celebrated this occasion worthily.
>
> Joh Bjelke-Petersen 1950.[1]

I.

The early years of the twentieth century in the South Burnett saw the bonding of pietistic evangelical Christianity with habits of hard work and individual effort motivated by a desire to subdue and till the land. The years after World War II - the years of the Cold War - saw patriotism and parochialism added to that mix.The verities of the earlier years stood strong.

Bjelke-Petersen won strong support from the Methodist Wide Bay-Burnett synod meeting in Kingaroy for his opposition to off-course betting. His parliamentary speech was "a statesman-like utterance and in the highest interests of the people of our state," the Methodist

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[1] Speaking at the centenary celebrations of Nanango, first town in the South Burnett. *KH* 27.3.1950

synod said. "We pray that others might be given the courage to follow his example."[2]

However, the `statesman´ himself had earlier eschewed legislative means for the reformation of society. His 1948 New Year Message as the Member for Nanango - after a year and a half in Parliament - restated his pietistic individualism, with a remark that,

> . . . the tendency of statesmen in seeking to improve conditions is to impose further rules and regulations. They overlook the fact that peace and security are not obtained by legislation alone but that the standard of national life stands or falls as the individual respects or flouts Divine laws.[3]

In 1956 the Ministers´ Fraternal complained to the Shire Council about the increasing incidence of Sunday sport. The fact that it was the Ministers´ Fraternal pursuing the issue demonstrated that the ecclesiastical consensus was in favour of a strict line on sabbatarianism, one of the yardsticks of evangelical pietism. The Council debate saw this engaging exchange between two of the peoples´ representatives:

> Cr Tuite: I always think there should be a law that all children up to 16 years should go to church.
>
> Cr Moore: What about after that age?
>
> Cr Tuite: They can please themselves then.[4]

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[2] *KH* 4.11.1954.
[3] *KH* 8.1.1948.
[4] *KH* 28.6.1956.

Shire Chairman T.J.O'Neill, a prominent local Catholic who would stand for the Queensland Labor Party against Bjelke-Petersen at the state election in 1957, supported the Fraternal.

Even when new Protestant groups arrived in Kingaroy - such as the Baptist Church, which established a congregation in 1952 for the first time - they were clad in familiar garb. Welcoming the first Baptist pastor, Dunshore, in 1952 a local layman A.Y.McAllister linked the progress of the district and the presence of the church saying:

> Kingaroy is destined to become a city. . . It is certainly situated in the midst of a wonderful area. . . and I believe it cannot but progress. Let us thank God. . . that we have been able to establish our Baptist Church in this promising area.[5]

The notion of material development is here expressed in religious imagery. It almost becomes a civil religion. The words "destined," "believe" and "promising" - all words with a religious connotation - refer to the material progress of the district.

Moreover by the fifties the doctrine of material development had outgrown its evangelical roots and was crossing boundaries the churches themselves would not consider crossing at that time. At his farewell in 1952, Fr J.W.Concannon, Roman Catholic parish priest for eleven years told his parishioners, "You live in a wonderful

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[5] *KH* 10.7.1952.

district. You have to make a contribution to its development and progress."[6] Concannon was developing a theme adopted by his archbishop, James Duhig, on a visit the previous year to lay the foundation stone of St Mary's Convent in Kingaroy. The *Kingaroy Herald* reported:

> 'Land at Kingaroy was rushed by farmers from the Darling Downs and other places. They made no mistake in their choice.'
>
> His Grace was expressing his admiration of Kingaroy and district an making the observation on the expansion of rural industry in the area. 'I regard Kingaroy as one of the richest parts of the famed Burnett areas,' he said.[7]

Were the Roman Catholics, like the Lutherans, seeking acceptance in the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture by adopting one of the myths of the emerging culture? Racial and sectarian antipathy was inherited from the northern hemisphere, and especially as a result of World War I, both the Germans and the Irish in Australia were suspected of harbouring anti-British attitudes. Catholicism was underrepresented in the South Burnett, and in instructing the faithful to follow what could be termed a protestant work ethic, was Concannon seeking to build the influence and acceptability of Catholicism?

Both Catholics and Lutherans further sought accommodation with the dominant political culture of the nation in opposing the depredations of Communism and in the case of

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[6] *KH* 24.1.1952.
[7] *KH* 5.4.1951.

the Lutherans, with very public affirmations of loyalty to the British crown.

II.

UELCA state president Pastor Lohe told the Bethany Church jubilee celebrations on Reformation Day in 1951:

> Christians should cultivate the great attitude of loyalty. First and foremost was loyalty to Jesus Christ. This loyalty is then shown in the loyalty to their parish and their pastor and to the church and the nation. Loyalty is shown in the attitude of the heart.[8]

At the golden jubilee celebrations of Kumbia (ELCA) Lutheran Church in 1959, the preacher, Pastor Temme linked piety and patriotism directly saying:

> Christian citizens make the most peace-loving, law-abiding and patriotic members of the state... [T]he best contribution they could make to the welfare and advancement of our state was to do all in their power to make it a Christian state through the preaching of God's Word.[9]

Bjelke-Petersen addressed the specific benefits of loyalty to the British crown in a statement upon the coronation of Queen Elizabeth in 1953:

> There are various reasons for this loyalty, particularly amongst members of the Commonwealth of Nations towards the throne of a country. Under Great Britain we have enjoyed liberty of worship, liberty of free enterprise and ... have shared in the protection of Britain's army, air and sea power.[10]

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[8] *KH* 1.11.1951.
[9] *KH* 19.2.1959.
[10] *KH* 28.5.1953.

He expanded on these liberties at a naturalization ceremony in Kingaroy in 1954:

> There is an added responsibility in coming to a new country whose people cherish the ideals represented in their standing for freedom from want, freedom to worship God as they see fit, and freedom of assembly.[11]

The phrase, `freedom to worship God as they see fit,' was not a concession to pluralism, but rather a reminder of the religious individualism characteristic of his pietism.

Rhetoric aside, perhaps the most quaint gesture of the times was the presentation by Joh Bjelke-Petersen of a cake at the Taabinga School 50th anniversary celebrations in 1947. Baked by Neta Bjelke-Petersen, the cake was described thus by the *Kingaroy Herald*: "A classic of artistry and tastiness, it carried the Union Jack and Australian flags."[12] This gastronomic expression of patriotism was no doubt enjoyed by the survivors and descendants of the Scandinavian migrants who formed the school's first classes. The paper also published the recipe!

III.

In the inter-war period the Protestant churches in Kingaroy were the main locus of anti-communist feeling and activity in the district. After World War II, the

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[11] *KH* 16.12.1954
[12] *KH* 7.8.1947.

Protestant churches passed the torch to the Catholic Church, and beyond to the political arena where it was picked up by the Bjelke-Petersen and the RSL.

However, CSSR Catholic missioners Dunphy and Hayes attracted "large and enthusiastic crowds" and the headline CATHOLIC MISSIONER ATTACKS COMMUNISM" appeared in the *Kingaroy Herald* as early as October 1947.[13] In 1949 the paper reported on the front page an RSL meeting described as, "one of the liveliest held in Kingaroy for some time," at which a special committee was appointed to collect facts, "to use against communism in the next twelve months." The paper concluded, "`Uncle Joe´ is on the outer with 100% of the members of the sub branch."[14]

Bjelke-Petersen´s New Year´s Message for 1949 was strongly anti-communist and later that year, when opening the Queensland Country Womens Association Flower Show and Fete in Kingaroy, the state president of the CWA, Mrs H.Sterne made representations to Bjelke-Petersen "regarding communistic activities."[15] During the Labor Party split in the mid-fifties Bjelke-Petersen was outspoken in Parliament about communist influence in the ALP.[16]

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[13] *KH* 30.10.1947.
[14] *KH* 25.8.1949.
[15] *KH* 31.3.1949.
[16] *KH* 12.9.1957.

There were, however, rare exceptions to the unmitigated militarism of the times. In the middle of the Korean War eighteen year old Leonard Schuter was granted non-combatant status by Mr E.W.Kinsman SM in the Kingaroy Magistrates Court after an application for conscientious objection to National Service. Schuter gave his religion as 'evangelical Lutheran'. He told the magistrate he would not use violence at any time, the *Kingaroy Herald* reported. Earlier, similar applications by a Jehovah's Witness and a Christadelphian were refused.[17]

IV.

The conservative character of the South Burnett was not only expressed in its religion but also its politics.

The only time Bjelke-Petersen sensed any risk to his incumbency was when opposing candidates were just as, if not more, conservative than he was. Between 1947 and 1963 that only occurred twice; in 1957 and 1963.

The 1950 state election was conducted on new boundaries with a new name for the electorate, Barambah. Bjelke-Petersen won the Country Party plebiscite convincingly with 678 votes to 141 for H.W.Cheers and 9 for J.D.Kennedy. Cheers was the Kingaroy manager of the Dairy Co-operative Association and prominent Show Society

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[17] *KH* 2.10.1952. The Jehovah's Witness and Christadelphians were probably regarded, unlike the Lutherans, as a sectarian group whose doctrines lacked legitimacy within the prevailing religious culture.

identity; Kennedy was a local commission agent.[18] In the 1950 general election, the ALP fielded Don Christensen, a school teacher, active unionist and scion of a well known local family. Christensen conducted an almost irenic campaign:

> It is my intention during this campaign not to attack personalities. I have never met Mr Petersen but my family has had dealings both social and business with him. He is a man whose personal integrity can never be questioned. I know him to be fair and above all a gentleman in the true sense of the word.[19]

Bjelke-Petersen won the election by 6018 votes to 1189.[20] Perhaps his majority was so intimidating that in 1953 and 1956 Bjelke-Petersen was re-elected unopposed.

In 1957, an election brought about by the Labor Party split, he was opposed by Cr. T.J.O'Neill for the Queensland Labor Party (later the DLP). Shire chairman, a prominent local accountant, and a Catholic layman, O'Neill was a formidable candidate.[21] Nephew of the first shire chairman of Kingaroy, he had strong credentials, but his timing was wrong. His misfortune in opposing Bjelke-Petersen at the time of the Labor split, meant Bjelke-Petersen won the election easily, aided by

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[18] *KH* 2.3.1950.
[19] *KH* 20.4.1950.
[20] *KH* 4.5.1950.
[21] *KH* 18.7.1957.

the fact that the ALP also ran a candidate. O'Neill polled 2736 votes to Bjelke-Petersen's 6503.[22]

During the campaign O'Neill was critical of Bjelke-Petersen's neglect of his electorate. Campaign manager Adermann defended Bjelke-Petersen saying:

> He has been wrongly accused of putting in most of his time in his own business, when as a matter of fact, in recent years he would not exceed an average of one short visit a year to his plant.[23]

Bjelke-Petersen added that,

> Councillor O'Neill apparently did not know that he had long since disposed of his earthmoving plant. His aerial spraying was organized from an office at Archerfield, [and] he very seldom had occasion to go to it.[24]

In 1963, Bjelke-Petersen's old adversary Percy Edwards also stood against him as an independent Country Party candidate.[25] Edwards had built up quite a power base in Kingaroy. He was manager of the Poultry Farmers Co-operative and President of the Kingaroy Chamber of Commerce. His candidature was a protest against the policies of the incumbent coalition government;

> He asserted that unsympathetic Liberal Country Party treatment of the peanut industry since 1959 has cost the farmers, shopkeepers and workers of the South Burnett in excess of 3 million pounds, and the dairy industry and others would swell this considerably.[sic] [26]

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[22] *KH* 6.6.1963.
[23] *KH* 1.8.1957.
[24] *KH* 1.8.1957.
[25] *KH* 24.4.1963
[26] *KH* 24.4.1963.

Like O'Neill six years before, he also charged Bjelke-Petersen with neglect of the electorate:

> We in this area have the most fertile belt of country in Australia, but we are the victims of the most infertile representations. It is not enough for a member to attend to the normal routine requests, enquires and social requirements of an electorate. It is necessary to keep conversant with the broader and more important policy requirements of the industries of the area, and where necessary fight vigorously for assistance and protection. I accuse Mr Bjelke-Petersen of letting us down in this regard.[27]

The charge stung, and indeed there may have been some truth in it. Bjelke-Petersen publicly defended himself and announced that his first election meeting of the campaign would be held in Barambah, for he had been in the habit of flying all over Queensland to campaign for his colleagues, cushioned by the magic carpet of his majority.[28] Adermann also came to Bjelke-Petersen's assistance again. Not only did he publicly defend Bjelke-Petersen,[29] but in the great Country Party tradition of pork barrelling, Adermann, who was Federal Primary Industries Minister at the time, announced in the last week of the campaign, "that a Commonwealth dairy industry extension grant will be continued for a further five years and at 100,000 pounds more than previously."[30]

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[27] *KH* 9.5.1963.
[28] *KH* 16.5.1963.
[29] *KH* 16.5.1963.
[30] *KH* 30.5.1963.

It was a backhanded compliment to Edwards, who had raised the plight of South Burnett dairy farmers as an election issue.

In 1960 Bjelke-Petersen received 60.69% of the primary vote; in 1963 he received 51.6%. Edwards received 10.02% of the vote, almost all of it directly from Bjelke-Petersen. The ALP's Weir improved his percentage of the vote marginally from 20.05% to 21.17%.[31] Overall, the number of primary votes received by the Country Party declined from 6018 in 1950 when the seat was drawn up to 4910 to 1963, in an electorate of approximately 10,000 voters.

V.

In spite of the allegations of his local critics, and the impact their criticism may have had on his share of the vote, Joh Bjelke-Petersen strongly promoted the sectional interests of his constituency. He was not alone in this, for parochialism had been one of the factors behind the formation of the Country Party in 1920.

Parochialism, and the promotion of sectional interests against the national interests was a feature of Charles Adermann's 1943 federal election campaign. Adermann won Maranoa from an incumbent Labor member, against a national voting trend towards Labor.

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[31] *KH* 6.6.1963.

He campaigned for higher minimum prices for primary products, increased manpower to be made available to rural industry and grower-controlled as opposed to government-controlled marketing boards.[32] One of his press advertisements ran:

> Food production has been reduced to dangerously low levels, prices for primary foodstuffs do not even represent wages to the farmer, the dairy industry has been placed on the dole, wheat production is inadequate for Queensland needs, milk supply is inadequate and rationed in Brisbane...ham is off the market, bacon is almost unprocurable and country towns are not developing. This is what Labor has accomplished in a short twenty-two months in office.[33]

Running in August 1943, just over a year after a threatened invasion has been repelled in the Coral Sea, advertisements such as these leave the impression that the choice was between national interest and sectional, even self interest. From the result, the conclusion may be drawn that the voters of Maranoa chose the latter.

After more than a decade in Canberra, Adermann was unchanged in his parochialism. In his capacity as chairman of broadcasting station 4SB, he told the chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Control Board in 1955 that,

> he had great faith in Australia and considered that the metropolitan areas should not be allowed to dominate the life. It has been proved that [primary] production has kept the economy of the country...stable.[34]

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[32] *KH* 5.8.1943.
[33] *KH* 19.8.1943.
[34] *KH* 11.8.1955.

In all of this, in the parochialism and the heightened sense of patriotism, there is the emergence of the sense of threat; the threat to faith and livelihood from communism within and beyond Australia's shores; the threat posed by distance from the centres of power; the threat of long tenure by governments of a different political persuasion.

The introduction of the system of electoral malapportionment by the Hanlon Labor Government threatened to make that tenure longer. In a 1949 speech to the Legislative Assembly, excerpts of which have been widely quoted over the years, Bjelke-Petersen attacked introduction of the zonal electoral system. The speech was extensively reported in the *Kingaroy Herald*, on September 8, 1949, under the headline, "Powerful forces at work that are not in Australia's interest."

> They had said in effect 'We are the government and whether you like it or agree with us in our methods we intend to continue as a governing body in this state.' How hypocritical was it for the Premier to say that it was important for the people to exercise their votes - which admittedly they should do at all times - when he legislated to offset the value of a vote at election time by placing the odds against the elector.
>
> One could not see the slightest difference in the actions of the present State and Federal Labor Governments from those of Hitler and other dictators in the initial steps they took to gain control over people. This disregard for democracy and failure to retain the equality of voting rights on the part of Labor, so that it might continue as a minority government by amending the Electoral Act, is one of the greatest blots in the records of a free country.

> The federal Labor Party's conduct. . . in Canberra provided the frightening evidence. . . of the complete disregard of the great parliamentary traditions upon democratic freedom is based. Lack of respect for the minorities' rights; confidence in the Speaker; respect for the reputation of the member or the rights of a member to speak his mind have been questioned or trampled upon. This federal pattern in many respects is similar to that in this state.[35]

Reading this speech in the light of subsequent history, it is perhaps hard to believe that after forty years as a member of parliament, the speaker on a subsequent occasion had difficulty explaining the doctrine of the separation of powers. There are two possible explanations for the content of this speech. The first explanation is that Bjelke-Petersen saw the electoral malapportionment as a threat which diminished the opportunity of his party and his constituency may have had to influence events. This explanation suggests that that the fine principles espoused in the speech are a cover for mere parochialism. At this point in his career, in his first term in office, Bjelke-Petersen was probably not that cynical. The speech, which reads like a set piece debating society speech, carries with it conviction.

Therefore it is unlikely that Bjelke-Petersen's opposition to the zonal system was less than principled because the introduction of the zonal electoral system in 1949 was designed to assist the ALP in rural areas where the Australian Workers Union was the dominant political

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[35] *KH* 8.9.1949.

force, the very country areas Bjelke-Petersen regarded as the backbone of the state.

The second, and more plausible explanation, is that at the time, he genuinely believed the principles he was espousing, and that once in power, he became living proof of Lord Acton's oft quoted dictum about corruption and power. Certainly a decade on the Opposition backbenches, absorbing the lessons from the ALP machine, was probably sufficient to change his mind. Equally certainly, had he been conscious of them, some of Luther's precepts about the responsibility of those in secular authority would have reinforced his changed views.

Bjelke-Petersen's parochialism was also to the fore in 1948 when a referendum on price control provided him with the opportunity to attack Canberra: "[W]hile planning for security and social justice, we must not lightly discard the virtues of initiative and liberty," he said.

> We in this district have seen and felt the effect of administration from Canberra, where they have little understanding of or sympathy with our requirements.[36]

A most interesting aspect of this speech is Bjelke-Petersen's use of the term 'social justice'. It was not a term he employed widely during his premiership, but as a first term Opposition backbencher he was heavily involved in an attempt by the Lutheran Church to secure justice

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[36] *KH* 27.5.1948.

for the Aboriginal people of Hopevale Mission in North Queensland who had been dispossessed during World War II.

VI.

The Aboriginal people at the Lutheran-run Hope Vale Mission north of Cooktown had been evacuated to Woorabinda, west of Rockhampton, during World War II in the face of a threatened Japanese invasion.[37] The Hopevale people were most unhappy at Woorabinda; and the Lutheran mission authorities were unhappy for them to be there. The mission authorities were concerned at the effects that civilization might have on the Aboriginal people who had been strictly separated from many European contacts and influences. After the war, the Lutheran Church lobbied the Queensland Government strongly for the Aboriginal people to be returned. However, it was necessary for a new site to be found. The Mission Board asked Bjelke-Petersen to assist in the selection of a new site and he made at least two trips to the Cooktown area by aircraft, accompanied by an inspector from the Department for Native Affairs.

Yet there was political opposition to the return of the Aboriginal people. In June 1948, UELCA Queensland state President Lohe wrote to his colleague, Pastor Reuther, "that Cabinet does not want a return of the natives."[38]

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[37] Hopevale Mission was established in 1886.
[38] H.J.Pohlner, *Gangurru*, (Milton: Hopevale Mission Board, 1986) 127.

Bjelke-Petersen was invited to assist once again. He suggested a deputation of Lutheran Church leaders to the Premier; obviously hopeful that a deputation of church leaders to the Premier on the matter of security of land tenure for Aboriginal people would bring results. The meeting could not be arranged, so Bjelke-Petersen himself made the representations, successfully.[39] In 1952 Bjelke-Petersen became chairman of the Hopevale Mission Board, a position he held until 1962. By the time he became a cabinet minister, Bjelke-Petersen had considerable background in Aboriginal affairs. In 1963, shortly before his elevation to Cabinet he made an extensive tour of North Queensland Aboriginal communities with J.C.A.Pizzey, then the Minister for Native Affairs, P.J.Killoran who had just been appointed permanent head of the Department for Native Affairs, and Roy Armstrong Country Party MLA for Mulgrave, and chairman of Pizzey's parliamentary committee on Aboriginal affairs.[40]

But experience was no substitute for empathy, and Bjelke-Petersen's empathy was with the large multinational mining companies who were poised to develop Queensland's mineral resources in the nineteen sixties, seventies and eighties. Some of those mineral resources just happened to be on Aboriginal reserves. That fact was to be of little consequence to the men of the Country Party when

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[38] Pohlner 126-127.
[40] *KH* 22.8.1963.

they captured the citadel of political power in Queensland upon the disintegration of the governing Labor Party in 1957. Their creed was:

> Development, decentralization of both industries and services and the expanded development of Queensland. The skills of the Australian workman, the drive of free enterprise, coupled with Government finance will help build a greater Queensland.[41]

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[41] Country Party campaign advertisement, *KH* 4.7.1957.

CHAPTER 11

IN THE SHOES OF `HONEST FRANK´

We are concerned that the Queensland Constitution contains nothing to prevent or hinder the setting up of a totalitarian state which would sweep democracy away in an incredibly short time.

Joh Bjelke-Petersen,
in Kingaroy during the 1957 election campaign.[1]

I.

Francis Nicklin, Premier of Queensland from 1957 to 1968, was a teetotal Methodist pineapple farmer. Joh Bjelke-Petersen, Premier of Queensland from 1968 to 1987, was a teetotal Lutheran peanut farmer. The difference between these two paragons of evangelical piety and morality was in style rather than substance. The Nicklin legend portrays Queensland´s 28th premier as `Honest Frank´: "decent, dull and rather dense."[2] The verdict of history on Bjelke-Petersen, while still open, is likely to be more ambiguous. Indeed a reappraisal of the legend of `Honest Frank´ is overdue, given the failure of Nicklin and his government to uncover in the nineteen sixties the roots of police corruption in Queensland which were exposed in the nineteen eighties.[3]

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[1] *KH* 1.8.1957.
[2] Evan Whitton, *The Hillbilly dictator* (Sydney: ABC Books, 1989) 7.
[3] Whitton 6, 10 and 15. Brian Stevenson´s chapter on Nicklin in Murphy, *Premiers* 475-493, fails to do this.

Born in 1895, Nicklin entered Parliament for the seat of Murrumba in 1932. Murrumba was a rural constituency based on the rich volcanic soils at the southern end of what is now the Sunshine Coast. His entry to parliament occurred at an election which saw the Country Party government of A.E.Moore ejected from office after only one term, amid the economic upheaval of the Great Depression.

After the 1949 redistribution, Nicklin switched to the newly created seat of Landsborough which he held until his retirement in 1968. Nicklin became Leader of the Opposition in 1941, and although there was some dissatisfaction with him as Opposition Leader, he led the coalition to victory over Labor in 1957.[4] Before entering Parliament he had been a soldier settler growing fruit on a 22 acre block in the Palmwoods area. Nicklin served in World War I, being mentioned in despatches and winning the Military Medal. Always close to ex-service organizations, he was a foundation member of the Palmwoods RSL in 1922.

Nicklin's personal style was that of an courteous, affable, friendly, even fatherly figure.[5] A political profile written early in his second term as premier, observed that when Nicklin - who was then 66 years old - retired, "something good will go out of politics,

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[4] J.Bjelke-Petersen 64.
[5] Stevenson 475, and J.Higgins, "Honest Frank Nicklin," *Bulletin*, 29.3.1961, 14-15.

something wholesome, fresh, possibly a little nostalgically anachronistic..."[6]

However, contemporary assessments of Nicklin's political style were less flattering:

> Not even his most fervent admirers would consider conceding him the ability of a Theodore or a McCormack, the implacable determination and ruthless ferocity of a Forgan Smith, the suave strength of a Cooper, the sledgehammer commonsense authority of a Hanlon, or the flamboyant arrogant ability of a Gair. It may be true that he has made fewer political mistakes than... any or all of these men, but then, of course, as a Nicklin critic points out, you can't make mistakes if you never do anything.[7]

II.

What Nicklin did do, however, was to retain the rhetoric of 'development', so much a part of the political philosophy of his predecessors. Visiting Kingaroy in 1958, during his first year as premier, Nicklin said:

> We are passionately intent on Queensland's progress and development and will do everything possible within our power to bring this about.[8]

Twenty years later Bjelke-Petersen said of Nicklin that, "it was mainly due to his vision and drive that Queensland has emerged ...with the best potential for future progress and development"[9] This doctrine of development is the most basic article of faith in

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[6] Higgins 16.
[7] Higgins 15.
[8] *KH* 30.10.1958.
[9] *QPD* 274 (30.3.1978) 27.

Queensland politics. As political scientist Margaret Cribb observed in 1975:

> Development continues to be the major theme of government statements and the focus of government policies as it always has been in Queensland."[10]

Even at the height of the Labor Party split in 1957, Premier V.C.Gair went before the electorate promising, "an all out attack on Communism, and assured his hearers of a continuance of the past developmental program,"[11] During the Nicklin years a number of large developmental projects commenced. The first was the Weipa bauxite mine, preliminary negotiations for which had been conducted by the outgoing Labor government. The universality of the doctrine of development was thus further evidenced by Mr E.G.Lloyd, Labor Opposition Leader when speaking on the Commonwealth Aluminum Corporation (Comalco) Agreement Bill in November 1957:

> We do not intend to adopt towards the Bill the attitude, "Nothing good can come out of Nazareth." It is quite obvious that the area must be a source of great development and irrevocably tied to the future of the State and the Commonwealth. As such great national resources have lain untapped for so many years, it is only right that every opportunity should be taken to support...their exploitation.[12]

The Weipa development was followed by the Moonie oil field, the Moura-Kianga export coal mines and the Gladstone alumina plant. Nicklin's deputy J.C.A.Pizzey

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[10] Cribb, *Current Affairs Bulletin*, 1975, 26.
[11] Political Chronicle, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 3.2 (May 1958): 237.
[12] *QPD* 219 (28.11.1957) 1418.

succeeded him in January 1968, but died in office the following July. When Bjelke-Petersen became the new leader of the Country Party, `development´ became the centrepiece of his political strategy.

III.

Development in Queensland during the Bjelke-Petersen years took three forms; mineral resource developments, tourism developments and infrastructure developments such as railways, roads, residential land developments, shopping centres. These latter were made necessary by the first two forms of development and the sunbelt migration that characterized Queensland particularly in the nineteen eighties. Large scale rural land development, through the brigalow scheme, was completed early in Bjelke-Petersen´s premiership. Although the Queensland Government looked after its rural constituency by building new dams and irrigation projects to increase the arability of agricultural land, it was mining developments which captured the government´s imagination.

Detailed descriptions of the political economy of Queensland during the Bjelke-Petersen years abound.[13] However, it is not so much the details of the developments that are of interest here, but the strategy used by Bjelke-Petersen to realize them. In 1987 - which

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[13] See for example R.Scott 62 ff; and R.Stuart, "Resources development policy: The case of Queensland´s export coal industry," in Patience 53-80.

was Bjelke-Petersen's last year as Queensland premier - financial journalist Andrew Stewart made an assessment of Bjelke-Petersen's likely style of government in the event of his Canberra campaign being successful. Stewart observed:

> Bjelke-Petersen is a big believer in giving government guarantees to businesses to get them going, despite the losses faced by the Queensland Government. . .[14]

Stewart cited a number of commercial projects in which the Queensland Government acted with private enterprise as the developer through statutory corporations such as Suncorp, formerly the State Government Insurance Office and the Queensland Tourism and Travel Corporation (QTTC). The QTTC for example was involved in developing a number of portions of crown land in choice tourist locations in partnership with private enterprise.

When criticized for the Queensland Government's role in such developments under a government so strongly committed to free enterprise, Bjelke-Petersen's response was: "Suncorp, QTTC and the like are, well, virtually private enterprise run on private enterprise lines." [15]

Said Stewart,

> He [Bjelke-Petersen] is easily impressed with phrases such as `job creating', `first in Australia' and `investment multiplier boom' (thus this business should have government support to start the

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[14] Andrew Stewart, "Canberra too far away," *Business Review Weekly*, 6.3.1987, 25.
[15] Stewart 25.

> multiplier) and anything to do with modern machinery.[16]

But it was ever so. As noted earlier, Bjelke-Petersen devoted part of his first speech in the Queensland Parliament to advocacy of the role of the state as a provider of capital for projects beyond what he termed "indispensable national works and services"[17]

In his first election manifesto as premier in 1969 Bjelke-Petersen spoke of "government and private enterprise working in harmony,"[18] of taking "the high road of development by the bold partnership between Government and private enterprise,"[19] and of co-operating "to the full with private enterprise to accelerate development."[20]

Obviously the character of the relationship between business and government was an important part of Bjelke-Petersen's political philosophy. Stewart concluded that,"Bjelke-Petersen's views on government and private enterprise are as unique as most of his other thoughts."[21] However, another commentator at that time, Quentin Dempster described Queensland as a `corporate

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[16] Stewart 23.
[17] *QPD* 190 (21.8.1947): 128.
[18] J.Bjelke-Petersen, "Government policy speech. Part 1, delivered at Toowoomba, April 22, 1969," Australian Country Party, Queensland Branch, 1969, 51 pp., Typescript, Fryer Library, University of Queensland.
[19] J.Bjelke-Petersen, "Government Policy Speech" 2.
[20] J.Bjelke-Petersen, "Government Policy Speech" 50.
[21] Stewart 25.

state'. Dempster listed numerous examples of the operation of corporatism in Queensland. These included:

- a proposed $130 million dollar investment in a Turkish power station and port which would use Queensland coal;

- Queensland Government Development Authority investment of $7.5 million in the then De Laurentis film studios at Coomera;

- investment of 5 million $2 units by the the Queensland Tourism and Travel Corporation in the Mirage Resorts Trust, in return for crown land at Port Douglas;

- legislative intervention to facilitate shopping centre and hotel developments on railway land at Toowong, Central and Roma Street stations in Brisbane;

- legislative intervention to assist the Iwasaki and Sanctuary Cove tourist developments;

- state government investments and guarantees for Evans Deakin Industries, Walkers Ltd (heavy engineering firms) and Queensland Cement.[22]

Dempster concluded: "There is hardly a major project in which the Sate Government does not have some direct taxpayer-funded or taxpayer-asset involvement."[23]

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[22] Quentin Dempster, "Waiting for benefits from corporate state," *SM* 1.2.87.
[23] *SM* 1.2.87. See also Quentin Dempster, "A week for thoughts on the corporate state," *SM* 22.3.1987.

IV.

So was Bjelke-Petersen's political strategy, while cloaked in the rhetoric of `free enterprise' best understood as a form of `corporatism'? A large volume of academic literature has been created around the concept of corporatism, and more particularly around the concept of `neocorporatism'

The origins of corporatism are various. They lie in the medieval *Ständesstaat* [24] Catholic social thought, in the papal encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1932)[25] and in the thought of the French sociologist Emile Durkheim.[26] It was from Durkheim that Benito Mussolini took many of the ideas about corporatism which shaped fascist Italy - the most widely known example of a corporate state. Neocorporatism emerged in postwar Europe after World War II, and purged of its fascist connotations, gained respectability as a philosophy and a strategy for postwar reconstruction.[27] Although English language studies of corporatism and neocorporatism were boosted by the advent of Thatcherism in Britain, most of the models of corporatism discussed

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[24] O.Newman, *The challenge of corporatism* (London: Macmillan, 1981) 4.
[25] W.Grant, ed., *The political economy of corporatism* (London: Macmillan, 1985) 5, and P.Williamson, *Varieties of corporatism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 30.
[26] Newman 7.
[27] Grant 6 and A.Cox & N.O'Sullivan, eds., *The corporate state. Corporatism and the state tradition in Western Europe* (Elgar: Aldershot, 1988) 6.

in the literature are European and South American. Of special significance are Portugal 1933-74, Austria both before and after World War II, Vichy France, and Brazil, Peru and Mexico after World War II. The concept is little discussed in the United States of America.

Corporatism has been variously defined as "action by the state in conjunction with organizations that are based on the division of labour in society,"[28] "a combination of private ownership and state control in which the state attempts to exercise direct control over the internal decision-making of companies and over the bargaining strategies of unions,"[29] and "a politico-economic system in which the state directs the activities of predominantly privately-owned business in partnership with ...interest groups.[30] Newman argues corporatism is "capitalism's most optimal face" and is:

> a structure best suited to handle the contingencies of monopolies, multi-nationals and universalized finance; to provide the most efficient legitimation and administration of the vastly expanded apparatus of the State; to mitigate the impending realities of class antagonisms and social dissent; ... and to underwrite the continuing flow of capital accumulation.[31]

Williamson has defined three varieties of corporatism: `consensual-licensed', `authoritarian-licensed' and

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[28] Grant 8.
[29] J.Winkler, "The coming corporatism," in R.Skidelsky ed., *The end of the Keynesian era* (London, Macmillan, 1977) 82.
[30] A.Cawson, "Pluralism, corporatism and the role of the state," *Government and Opposition* 13 (1978): 187.
[31] Newman ix.

`contract.'[32] The style of corporatism evidenced in Queensland fits best between the `authoritarian-licensed' variant, in which the "corporatist structures are established to secure the greatest possible level of state control," and the `contract' system in which the state, "achieves domination by securing favourable contracts with producer groups through bargaining."[33] The key differences are in the degree of state control over economic activity and the social order. In the authoritarian licensed system "there is limited support for the underlying values ...of the corporatist system...and the economic and social order ...have to be imposed,"[34] whereas under the contract model there is "general consensus in support of the existing order, but particularistic demands and conflict threatens stability of the order."[35]

V.

The increasing corporatist inclinations of the Queensland Government coincided with the decision of the Country Party to break out of its traditional rural base, and to attempt to become the major conservative party in politics.[36] Whether a cause or a consequence of

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[32] Williamson 11.
[33] Williamson 11.
[34] Williamson 11.
[35] Williamson 11.
[36] For accounts of this transition see Cribb in Costar & Woodward 68-81, and for an insider's apologia see A.Metcalfe, *In their own right. The rise to power of*

corporatism is unclear, but beginning in the early nineteen seventies the transformation of the Country Party into the National Party strengthened the links between the government and the corporate sector. Converting a rural rump to a broad based conservative party cost money, so integral to the party's strategy was the solicitation of funds to not only finance candidates in seats it had never before contested but to project the image of the party and its leader on television. Thus the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation was established.[37] Considerable criticism was levelled at the Foundation by the Labor Party, the Liberal Party, and National Party dissidents. The dissidents alleged standover tactics by the fundraisers and two Liberal parliamentarians called for a Royal Commission into the Foundation. The then Labor Opposition Leader Keith Wright accused the Nationals of mafia-like tactics,[38] and political commentator Margaret Cribb observed,

> mounting public suspicion that the National Party government was being too kind to its friends, those being substantial subscribers to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation.[39]

Later in the mid nineteen eighties, when Bjelke-Petersen and Party President Sir Robert Sparkes fell out, Bjelke-Petersen and Sir Edward Lyons formed Kaldeal as a

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Joh's Nationals (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1984.)

[37] Metcalfe 67.

[38] Metcalfe 68-9.

[39] Political Chronicle, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 27.3 (Dec 1981) 390.

receptacle for corporate donations.[40] Fitzgerald QC concluded that,

> there were occasions when persons or organizations engaged in business with the government or seeking business from it, made substantial donations to its political party. There was no disclosure of that and the attitude and practices adopted allowed such donations to remain hidden.[41]

VI.

Another significant dimension of this Queensland-style corporatism was Bjelke-Petersen's own involvement as a participant on both sides, in government and business, and his consequent inability to distinguish between public interest and private interests. His relationship with Lyons, as documented by Fitzgerald is evidence of that.[42] Similarly, Bjelke-Petersen's ownership of shares in companies dealing with the government he led is well documented.[43]

As far back as 1963 Bjelke-Petersen was mixing private business and public interest in an inappropriate manner. The independent Country Party candidate for the seat of Barambah in the 1963 state election campaign, P.B.Edwards was strongly critical of Bjelke-Petersen for allegedly neglecting the electorate. Edwards asserted that Bjelke-Petersen had done little to promote industries in the

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[40] *Fitzgerald Report* 89.
[41] *Fitzgerald Report* 86.
[42] *Fitzgerald Report* 96-102.
[43] *Four Corners*, ABC-TV, 5.11.1977; Communist Party of Australia 15-16 and Whitton 12 *ff.

electorate. In reply, Bjelke-Petersen referred to the construction of the new South Burnett abattoir at Murgon:

> My opponents say that I have done nothing worthwhile in relation to industries, but I not only discussed this matter with Mr T.Hiley [Treasurer] and the Hon O.O.Madsen MLA, Agriculture Minister, on a number of occasions to get their agreement, but we also as a family put in a substantial amount of cash in the early stages to assist the project, and from my information, neither of my opponents, who wax so eloquent as to what should be done in such matters have given such concrete assistance.[44]

This incident rubricates Bjelke-Petersen's inability - in the secular sphere, in Luther's 'kingdom of the world' - to distinguish between his public role as an elected representative and his private role as a business person. Did he in fact use his position as a Member of Parliament to become part of the abattoir investment? His inability is further underlined by his criticism of his opponents for not making the same kinds of compromises he did.

VII.

Corporatism also demands that law enforcement agencies preserve the benefits of the corporate state.[45] This was the manner in which Bjelke-Petersen used the Queensland police force. For example, the infamous street march bans grew not only out of an inherent fear of civil disorder, but also out of a desire to dampen down the anti-uranium movement.[46] Having witnessed the manner in

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[44] *KH* 16.5.1963.
[45] Williamson 11.
[46] Frank Brennan, *Too much order with too little law*, (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983) 125.

which the street demonstrations of the Moratorium movement put an end to American and Australian participation in the war in Vietnam, Bjelke-Petersen was not about to allow street protests to thwart uranium mining.

Authoritarianism is both a feature of corporatism and a frequently commented upon characteristic of the political culture of Queensland.[47] Bjelke-Petersen is perceived correctly as not only inheriting but enhancing the potency of that characteristic of the political culture. Yet the origins of Bjelke-Petersen's authoritarianism lie not only in the political culture, but also in his patriarchal home background.[48] The fullest expression of Queensland style corporatism can be seen the relationships between Sir Edward Lyons, businessman, Sir Terence Lewis, police commissioner, and Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, politician. And the key question is thus: did this corporatist philosophy derive from the religious culture within which Bjelke-Petersen grew up?

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[47] Reynolds, "Queensland's autocracy" 4-13; McQueen, "Queensland: A state of mind," 41-51; D.J.Murphy, "Queensland's image" 77-92; G.Lewis, "Violence in Australian history. The Queensland experience," *Meanjin* 33.3 (1974):313-19 and D.S.Anderson and J.S.Western, "State differences in authoritarian attitudes," *Australian Journal of Psychology* 22.3 (1970):261-264.

[48] For discussion on Luther's view that government is an extension of the patriarchal family see Chapter 2.

VIII.

One possible source of Bjelke-Petersen's corporatist ideas was the League of Rights. Andrew Stewart, for example, attributes Bjelke-Petersen's alleged suspicion of banking and financial institutions to the influence of the "bank-hating League of Rights, which has retained contact with the Premier since the Depression".[49] While Stewart provides no evidence of this influence, and indeed the League of Rights itself was only established in Australia in 1949,[50] it is appropriate to briefly examine the League and Bjelke-Petersen's relationship to it.

The economic doctrines of the League of Rights derive from the Social Credit movement, the influence of which has already been traced in the South Burnett before World War II. Even though Social Credit and corporatism share associations with classical fascism, the League would regard the centralism implicit in corporatism as anathema. As League director Eric Butler put it, "There can be no hope of Civilization being regenerated unless the power to create and control money is decentralized."[51] The League purports to draw heavily

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[49] Stewart 35.
[50] A.A.Campbell, *The Australian League of Rights. A study in political extremism and subversion* (Collingwood: Outback Press, 1978) 89.
[51] Eric Butler, *The money power versus democracy* (Melbourne: Australian League of Rights, 1975) 2.

on Christian theology to buttress its ideology. Butler wrote:

> The doctrine concerning free will is a major feature of the essential Christian heritage. It it only through genuine freedom of choice that the individual can seek to love God and to serve him. The basis of all freedom is economic freedom.[52]

According to Butler, Christ affirmed the individual ownership of private property in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard (Matt. 20:1-16). Moreover the parable of the talents (Luke 19: 11-18) is "a lesson in favour of individual enterprise."[53] "Social Credit," concluded McCullagh, "like the League does today constantly reaffirmed the ideal values of a Christian, capitalist society."[54]

Politically, both Douglas and Butler attacked the principle of the supremacy of parliament and the party system. Douglas despaired of the Canadian and New Zealand Social Creditors who formed political parties to pursue their ideas, even though in Canada they were electorally successful. Douglas and Butler preferred an extra-parliamentary process of electoral accountability, arguing `the supremacy of parliament,' to be "a comparatively modern idea ...and a departure from the original concept of limited Constitutional Government in

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[52] Eric Butler, *The essential Christian heritage* (Melbourne: Australian League of Rights, 1971) 13.
[53] Butler, *Essential Christian heritage* 14.
[54] McCullagh 41.

England."[55] This intriguing affirmation of the place of the Constitution has led the League to promote the Voter's Veto or Citizen Initiated Referenda, which are a form of political decentralization. Influential in rural Queensland since the nineteen sixties, and particularly on the Darling Downs, Central and South Burnett areas, the League has a number of public faces. These include Voters' Policy Associations, the Institute for Economy Democracy, the Conservative Speakers Club, The Australian Heritage Society, Ladies in Line Against Communism (the Lilac League), the Save Our State movement and the Rockhampton Anti-Inflation Study Group.[56]

Fearful of the disruptive influence of the League, the attitude of the Country/National Party organization has waxed from toleration and irritation in 1971,[57] to outright condemnation in 1988.[58] In 1971, Country Party President Robert Sparkes estimated that less than 1% of the party's 21,000 members were also members of the League of Rights.[59] Nevertheless there existed considerable commonality of interest between the League and the Country Party.

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[55] Eric Butler, *Releasing reality* (Melbourne: Australian League of Rights, 1979) 29.
[56] Campbell 111-114.
[57] *Sunday Australian* 18.7.1971.
[58] R.Boswell, "The Australian League of Rights," Speech to the Australian Senate, 10 pp., typescript, 27.4.1988.
[59] *Sunday Australian* 18.7.1971

"They have a lot of objectives and ideals which are similar to ours," Bjelke-Petersen said of the League in 1971.[60] Florence Bjelke-Petersen attended League of Rights meetings in 1980, and received League propaganda regularly.[61] Joh Bjelke-Petersen was reported being critical of the League's proposals for fighting inflation in 1971 at Jandowae on the Darling Downs in the League heartland.[62] Florence Bjelke-Petersen commented at that time:

> Their attitude on anti-communism and raising the morality of the community are good. I don't think much of their fiscal policy. But I don't know much about it.[63]

Thus it is unlikely that Bjelke-Petersen was greatly influenced by the economic ideas of the League of Rights. However, the League's conception of a world communist conspiracy is another matter. In the virulent intensity of his anti-communism and the vehemence of his rhetoric against the world communist conspiracy, as he perceived it, Bjelke-Petersen shared much common ground with the League. Yet it is doubtful whether Bjelke-Petersen had any philosophical or intellectual understanding of communism. He seemed for example to be unable to distinguish between Fabian socialism and Marxian communism. "Communist" was almost a generic term applied to people whose political philosophy was different, and

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[60] *Australian* 6.8.1971.
[61] *CM* 18.3.1988.
[62] *Sunday Australian*, 18.7.1971.
[63] *Sunday Australian*, 18.7.1971.

during his premiership dissenters were frequently labelled communists. Bjelke-Petersen's antipathy towards communism was expressed in his first political campaign, and remained a constant theme in his political rhetoric everafter.

In his home constituency, fears of a communist world conspiracy were reinforced strongly, especially in the Whitlam years between 1973 and 1975, during which League of Rights activities in the South Burnett reached heights unparalleled before or since. The activities of the League were strongly promoted through the *South Burnett Times*, the local weekly newspaper, whose Managing Director Jim Adams (1908-1976) was a prominent League activist. Adams was a prime mover in the Save Our State movement, a League front group founded in Kingaroy in 1963,[64] and state president of another League front organization, the Association for the Preservation of Local Government. Byron Bay-born, Adams arrived in Kingaroy in 1958 after a career as an electrical contractor and publican in Queensland and northern New South Wales. He purchased the *South Burnett Times*, then based at Wondai, moved it to Kingaroy in 1961, improved its circulation six-fold and in 1971 took over the long established *Kingaroy Herald*, converting the local print media duopoly into a monopoly, He had already extended

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[64] Campbell 114.

his influence in 1968 by establishing the *Central Burnett Times* based at Munduberra.[65]

Adams had few scruples about using his media outlets to promote the League of Rights. During the Whitlam years, Eric Butler made a number of visits to the South Burnett, which were well publicized and well reported in the *South Burnett Times*.[66] The paper carried large numbers of Letters to the Editor from League activists, including a number from Brisbane, Rockhampton and the Darling Downs. Half page and full page `advertisements´ appeared for League sponsored events.[67]

Adams and the League built strong links to local Country Party identities in the South Burnett. In 1983, through the local Voters´ Policy Association, the League sponsored public meetings in Kingaroy and Murgon against the Whitlam government´s health policy. Butler was present and spoke at both meetings. The Murgon meeting was chaired by Murgon Shire chairman, Cr G.W.Roberts, chairman of the Barambah Electorate Council of the Country Party, a close political associate of Bjelke-Petersen,[68] and who in 1986 became with Sir Edward Lyons the only other director of Kaldeal, Bjelke-Petersen´s private political fund.[69] Another large

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[65] *SBT* 3.3.1976.
[66] *SBT* 1.2.1973; 10.10.1973; 7.11.1973; 15.4.1974.
[67] *SBT* 14.9.1974.
[68] *SBT* 10.10.1973.
[69] Fitzgerald, *Report* 89.

League rally held in Kingaroy in 1974 was chaired by Kingaroy Shire Chairman, Cr L.G.Crawford, who had unsuccessfully contested the Country Party plebiscite for the federal seat of Wide Bay earlier that year.[70]

Charles Adermann, along with Eric Butler and Adams, was the keynote speaker at the launch of the Save Our State campaign in November 1973. Adams seemed to regard Adermann's participation as a coup, giving greater credibility to the League.[71] However, for the local community there were unforeseen and unacknowledged dangers. What hope was there of the local community receiving any balanced media coverage, let alone any critical comment on these meetings when the Managing Director of the local newspaper and the chairman of the local radio station were keynote speakers with Eric Butler? The relationship between Adermann and Adams was obviously close and personal: Adermann was a pall-bearer at Adams' funeral in 1976.[72]

Finally, the League offered strong support to Bjelke-Petersen. At a League organized meeting in Kingaroy in February 1973, when the ink was barely dry on the commissions of the Whitlam government, Butler was reported as saying that, "although he favoured no party, the Queensland premier was the only political figure in

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[70] *SBT* 28.8.1974.
[71] *SBT* 7.11.1973.
[72] *SBT* 3.3.1976.

the Commonwealth taking a stand against continuing centralization policies."[73] Later that year, the *South Burnett Times* reported its Managing Director as saying that a Save Our State rally was seeking to "provide grassroots non-party support" for Bjelke-Petersen in his crusade against Canberra.[74] According to reports of the rally published in the *South Burnett Times*, Adams "stressed the campaign must be conducted on a non-party basis," and having offered the League's ritual incantation of non-partisanship, continued, "We have to challenge all men in the federal sphere to make a stand as Mr Bjelke-Petersen has done."[75] A subsequent rally, in the spring of 1974 was attended by Bjelke-Petersen and reportedly 250 other people, including Adermann. SOS state director, Mr H.Reeding of Dalby told the gathering that, "SOS was fighting the need for a return to basic Christian principles."[76]

The closeness of the relationship between Bjelke-Petersen and Adams was revealed when Adams died in March 1976. Bjelke-Petersen paid tribute to Adams saying:

> Jim lived and worked to further the interests of our district and state. In recent years I had a very close association with him in this way. Jim Adams personally spent a great deal of his own time and money in the fight against socialism to make sure we kept our free way of life. Through the media in which he exerted a big influence, it is hard to

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[73] *SBT* 21.2.1973.
[74] *SBT* 7.11.1973.
[75] *SBT* 21.11.1973.
[76] *SBT* 28.8.1974.

> estimate just how much he achieved. I will always remember gratefully all he did to help me.[77]

The support of the League enabled Bjelke-Petersen to take his anti-Whitlam crusade across the country secure in the knowledge that his citadel among the silos was inviolate in his absence. Yet, however great the influence of the League of Rights on Bjelke-Petersen - and that influence was probably at its peak between 1973 and 1975 - its influence may have overlain, and reinforced, some basic Lutheran precepts pertaining to the fear of civil disorder which were described in Chapter 2.

IX.

So did Bjelke-Petersen's Lutheranism contain the seeds of his corporatist ideas? On the surface, it appears that there is little that the thought of Martin Luther would contribute to the development of corporatism. Yet this description - by Williamson - of how theorists of corporatism understood the nature of the state could be describing the views of Martin Luther on the subject:

> To corporatists the state was not to be restricted to a Spencerian 'hindrance or hindrances' or a slumbering nightwatchman. Instead, the corporatist state can best be described as one of guardianship. This reflected the theorists' proposition that the state had a definite moral base drawn from either 'God' or from the nation's past; indeed the moral and political bases of the state were seen as closely fused. The state was, therefore, endowed with a moral authority to serve the greater glory of 'God' or the nation's interest, and had the right to intervene in economic and social affairs whenever

[77] *SBT* 3.3.1976.

> they conflicted with 'God's' will or the national interest.[78]

Most theorists of corporatism in the nineteenth century were Catholic, and so they shared with Luther, a common medieval view of the social contract which is the basis not only for corporatism, but for the Lutheran understanding of the state. Luther did not apply his own radical doctrines of what was to become Protestant individualism to the social realm; they remained in the spiritual realm. For his social teaching, Luther drew on his Catholic heritage.

The literature on corporatism illuminates the presence of corporatism in Germany in the late nineteenth as well as twentieth centuries. Bismarck, a pietistic evangelical Lutheran is regarded as a progenitor of state or authoritarian corporatism,[79] which V.R.Berghahn describes thus:

> ...the existence of a government-business tie with the implicit or explicit purpose of eroding the powers of a parliamentary-democratic assembly and of ostracizing or totally emasculating a free working class movement constitutes, if anything a state corporatism. And this...was the corporatism that grew up and persisted in pre-1914 Germany.[80]

To conclude that Bjelke-Petersen's corporatism was mediated via his Danish Lutheran antecedents is to draw too long a bow, because there is no direct evidence of

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[78] Williamson 21.
[79] V.R.Berghahn, "Corporatism in Germany in historical perspective," in Cox and O'Sullivan 110.
[80] Berghahn 113.

it. Yet the Lutheran tradition; in its conception of the world, and of the place of the Christian in the world; in its expression of the functions of the state and the paternal model by which rulers relate to the ruled; and in the manner in which these doctrines have found expression in the political culture of Germany, leaves open the possibility that Lutheran adherents, Bismarck as much as Bjelke-Petersen, might be predisposed by their religious beliefs to a corporatist political philosophy.

X.

The strongest argument against the idea of Bjelke-Petersen as a corporatist comes from those who regard him as a populist. Mullins, for example, explains the entire political history of twentieth century Queensland in terms of a `left populism' and `right populism'[81] Patience also discusses Bjelke-Petersen as a populist, but is less convinced than Mullins of Bjelke-Petersen's populist credentials, seeing instead, "some quasi-populist stands...in the ideological parameters of the Bjelke-Petersen governments,"[82] On the other hand James Walter sees in Bjelke-Petersen's rhetoric, "a populist appeal of a classic kind."[83] Thus there is some consensus among the commentators that there exists an

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[81] B.Mullins, "Populist politics and development," in B.Head, ed., *The politics of development in Australia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1986) 138-162.
[82] Patience 279.
[83] James Walter, "Johannes Bjelke-Petersen," in D.J.Murphy, *Premiers* 524-5.

element of populism in Bjelke-Petersen's electoral appeal. Populism, of course is the antithesis of corporatism, and Patience explicitly refers to Bjelke-Petersen as an anti-corporatist influence in Australia's federal system.[84]

The argument is reinforced by the fact that the League of Rights - which exerted some influence on Bjelke-Petersen - is located more at the populist end of the political spectrum than the corporatist; if indeed it is legitimate to pose populism and corporatism as being at opposite ends of a spectrum. Nevertheless, in the light of the evidence provided by Bjelke-Petersen's corporatist activity in government, those who claim Bjelke-Petersen is a populist must argue it more convincingly, and refute the idea that he was a corporatist.

There is, however, a second strand of argument which can run counter to the proposition that Bjelke-Petersen was a corporatist. Did Bjelke-Petersen's antipathy towards trade unions and socialism make him an unlikely corporatist? For a key concept in corporatism is 'tripartism', the reaching of consensus between business, unions and government.[85] Grant also suggests that corporatism is a doctrinal companion of social democracy

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[84] Patience 10, 13.
[85] Newman 75, and Grant 9.

[86] and this may well be the case in contemporary forms of neocorporatism.

If Bjelke-Petersen can be claimed legitimately to be a corporatist, then his corporatism was more likely to be homegrown and arise from the political culture of Queensland unencumbered by any doctrinaire or philosophical conceptions of the corporate state. Indeed, his Lutheran worldview may have predisposed him to accept and operate upon corporatist ideas when they emerged within the political culture of Queensland. For there is a nascent tradition of corporatism within the political history of Queensland in the twentieth century.

The years of Labor hegemony over Queensland politics from 1915 to 1957 were dominated by Ryan (1915-1919), Theodore (1919-1925) McCormack (1925-1929), Forgan Smith (1932-1942), Hanlon (1946-1952) and Gair (1952-1957). Of these six premiers, only the last two, Hanlon and Gair represented metropolitan electorates; the others represented North Queensland. Their primary interests were in primary industries: agriculture and mining. Perhaps the most influential was William Forgan-Smith.

Forgan-Smith entered parliament in 1915 as a "vigorous proponent of State socialism" but changed his mind, realizing, after the failure of Labor's state enterprises in the early 1920s, that "control was more important than

[86] Grant 6.

ownership."[87] The failure of state enterprises in the early nineteen twenties left the Labor Party looking for new ways of achieving their objective of ameliorating the effects of capitalism.[88] The departure from Queensland politics of the men who had brought Labor to power in 1915, Ryan, Filhelly and Hunter,[89] coincided with the failure of state enterprises, and it was left to Theodore and Forgan Smith to articulate a new political strategy. Thompson suggests that Forgan Smith was lukewarm about the nationalization planks of the Labor Party platform. During his premiership, Forgan Smith wrote:

> Socialism does not aim at the destruction of private property, but on the contrary demands that all men shall have an equal right to own property. Socialism does not aim to destroy profitable activity...[90]

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[87] B.Carroll, "William Forgan Smith," in D.J.Murphy, *Premiers* 401.

[88] For discussion of state enterprises see D.J.Murphy, "The establishment of state enterprises in Queensland," *Labour History* 14 (May 1968): 13-22.

[89] T.J.Ryan (1876-1921), was the reformist Labor premier elected in 1915. He left the premiership to enter federal politics in 1919. John Hunter (1863-1940) and J.A.Filhelly (1882-1945) were members of Ryan's first cabinet. Hunter, a Presbyterian storekeeper from Roma, was elected as member for Maranoa in 1912 and served as Secretary for Lands and without portfolio until becoming Queensland Agent-General in London in 1919. Filhelly, a Roman Catholic civil servant before entering politics as MLA for Paddington in 1912, served in various portfolios including Railways, Justice and Works before succeeding Hunter as Queensland Agent-General in London in 1922. For further details see Waterson, *Biographical register... 1860-1929*.

[90] An undated (ca 1938?) pamphlet, "Socialism - Labour's Objective," cited in M.J.Thompson, "The political career of William Forgan Smith - as it influenced economic and political development in Queensland," unpublished B.Econ thesis, University of Queensland, 1965, 24.

Forgan Smith moved to apply the new strategy of control rather than ownership on becoming minister for Agriculture and Stock in 1925, with the Primary Producers Organization and Marketing Act (1926). The 1926 Act was a development on Theodore's Primary Producers' Organization Act (1922) which established a Council of Agriculture, a body with government and primary producer representatives which controlled agricultural production and marketing in Queensland.[91] Apart from the brief interregnum of the Moore government between 1929 and 1932, Forgan-Smith retained control of Queensland agriculture until his retirement in 1942. When in power briefly, the Country Party left Forgan Smith's structures largely unaltered.[92] Politically, the effect of Labor's agricultural policies cut the ground from underneath the Country Party, so the Country Party only gained office upon the disintegration of Labor in 1957. Theodore and Forgan Smith's corporatist philosophy - for that it what it was - was continued by their successors, both Labor and Country Party. The basic philosophy and structures of commodity organization set down by Forgan Smith remain in operation at the time of writing.

Under Forgan-Smith's successors, the state also became involved in large scale agricultural land developments.

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[91] D.Shogren, "Agriculture 1915-29," in D.J.Murphy, et. al., *Labor in Power* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1980) 189.
[92] Thompson 48.

The Peak Downs scheme (1948-53) was designed to increase the amount of agricultural land in the Central Highlands region, west of Rockhampton, and increase food supplies to post-war Britain. A corporatist instrumentality, the Queensland-British Food Corporation (QBFC) was established to conduct the scheme, with the Hanlon government contributing one quarter of the finance, some half a million pounds and appointing two senior public servants to the management of the corporation.[93] The Fitzroy Basin brigalow land clearing scheme was conducted between 1957 and 1975 in central Queensland by the Country-Liberal coalition government in partnership with the Commonwealth; this time without the altruistic motive of feeding the hungry.

Thus within the framework of primary industry, which was the dominant form of economic activity in Queensland, corporatist principles have been applied since the nineteen twenties. Even authoritarianism, a characteristic of some forms of corporatism could also be deemed to have been part of the Theodore-Forgan Smith philosophy. Both were accused of being autocratic and dictatorial.[94]

So in Bjelke-Petersen we find the apotheosis of a political tradition, in which Griffith, Kidston and Ryan are but increasingly faint ehoes of nineteenth century

[93] Fitzgerald, *From 1915* 188.
[94] D.J.Murphy, *Premiers* 317 and 420.

English radicalism. It was a tradition in which Macalister, McIllwraith, McCormack, Theodore and Hanlon manipulated the established democratic processes, and in which Theodore and Forgan Smith developed a form of authoritarian corporatism. It was also a tradition which would bring Bjelke-Petersen and his government into conflict with those who claimed to be the inheritors of another, longer tradition: that of historic, orthodox Christianity.

PART III.

RELIGIOUS RESISTANCE TO THE ETHOS OF THE RELIGIOUS CULTURE: QUESTIONS OF RIGHTS ...AND WRONGS

CHAPTER 12

PASTORAL STAFFS AND POLICE BATONS

We who are nourished in the brilliant insight of the Bible, who are the heritors of Calvin, Knox, Cromwell and Wesley, need no political parties, socialist or otherwise, to form our minds on the proper liberties of Christian subjects.

Rollie Busch,
Uniting Church Moderator in Queensland, 1978.[1]

I.

When M.J.Ahern deposed Bjelke-Petersen as premier of Queensland in December 1987, he vowed at his victory media conference to consult churches on major issues.[2] That Ahern did so is indicative of the nadir reached in relationships between Bjelke-Petersen and the major Christian churches in Queensland. The chapters in this section deal with the emergence among members of the major religious denominations in Queensland of resistance to the policies pursued by Bjelke-Petersen and his administration especially in the areas of civil liberties and human rights. The consonance between the dominant ethos of the religious culture of Queensland (described in Section 1 of this study) and Bjelke-Petersen's religious world view (described in Section 2 of this

[1] Press conference by R.A.Busch 20.3.1978 reported *Life & Times* 29.3.1978: 6.
[2] ABC Radio 1.12.1987.

study) means that the resistance described below was also antipathetic to that ethos. Such consonance helps explain not only the limited success of the resistance to the policies of the Bjelke-Petersen administration, but also Bjelke-Petersen's continued electoral success.

In specific terms, this chapter deals with conflicts between Bjelke-Petersen and members of the major Christian churches in Queensland on civil liberties issues. Conflict over Aboriginal issues, by virtue of its scale during the Bjelke-Petersen years, is described separately in succeeding chapters. Subsequent chapters detail conflict over human relationships, industrial relations and electoral reform.

The conflicts between Bjelke-Petersen and the churches arose out of different understandings of the respective roles of church and state in a democratic society, and in particular, of the right of Christian people in a democratic society to oppose actions by governments they believed contrary to Christian teaching.

The Lutheran background of what is best described as `the doctrine of resistance' has been outlined in Chapter 2. This doctrine, which can be traced back to the New Testament, and to the persecutions of the early Church under Nero (AD 37-68) and Diocletian (AD 245-313), has also been a particular feature in the history of the churches born of the Protestant Reformation.

In its modern formulation, the doctrine is best defined as the principle that Christian citizens are under no moral obligation to obey laws that in all conscience they believe are contrary to their Christian beliefs, and that ultimately Christians may oppose governments even to the point of taking up arms against an unjust and immoral civil authority. Such has been the case in Germany between 1933 and 1945 and South Africa since 1960.[3]

However, this 'doctrine of resistance' was only one among a plurality of views on the subject of the proper relationship of church and state which were extant in Queensland in the years under review. The predominant views came from the pietist tradition. There were those who held that the church should only speak in public on matters of personal morality such as temperance, gambling and prostitution. There were others who held that the bishops and councils of the church should restrict their utterances to matters 'spiritual', and that matters 'political' were not legitimately within their purview, however the terms 'spiritual' and 'political' might be defined. There were yet others for whom the very notion of the church *qua* church, as an ecclesia, speaking its mind in public (or attempting to give voice to what it understood to be the mind of Christ) was anathema. Some

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[3] For a discussion of the contemporary doctrine of resistance see Paul Lehmann, "Piety, power and politics. Church and Ministry between ratification and resistance," *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 44 (1983) 58-72.

of these people held to the classical Lutheran understanding of the relationship between the Christian and the state previously described. Others, even further along this spectrum from activism are best defined as `quietist.´[4]

On the evidence, Bjelke-Petersen seems to have been of the view that public pronouncements by bishops and councils should remain in the domain of the `spiritual´, and should never venture into the `political´. Even though this view resonates with the classical Lutheran doctrine of the two kingdoms, (spiritual and temporal), in none of the available evidence does Bjelke-Petersen articulate that doctrine, and it is just as possible that his views were acquired from the religious culture at large by osmosis.

II.

In 1976, in the wake of the electoral destruction of the Whitlam Government, key members of the Queensland Government kept watch for signs that the socialist leviathan they had sought to slay would rise again from the deep. While on that watch, they attempted to net two small minnows: Action for World Development (AWD) and the

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[4] Quietism is describes `any system of spirituality minimizing human activity and responsibility.´ Its origins date from the seventeenth century writer de Molinos. Quietism was condemned by Innocent XI in his bull `Coelestis Pastor´ in 1687. Cross & Livingstone 1152.

House of Freedom. AWD was an ecumenical aid and development education agency established by the Australian Council of Churches and the Australian Episcopal Conference of the Roman Catholic Church in 1969. The House of Freedom was an alternative lifestyle Christian community located in inner city Brisbane.

During the 1975 federal election campaign Dr John Lockwood, Liberal Party MLA for Toowoomba North asked John Herbert, Liberal MLA for Sherwood and Minister for Community and Welfare Services, about federal grants made to the House of Freedom for youth work. Lockwood also alleged that House of Freedom members had disrupted a street procession by members of the Christian Mission to the Communist World, concluding his question:

> Is this so called Christian youth group, the House of Freedom, in fact a socialist propaganda machine dedicated to debasing, deriding, disrupting and destroying all Christian institutions and objectives?[5]

While taking the question without notice, Herbert was sufficiently briefed to be able to quote the House excerpts of the House of Freedom manifesto, and used the opportunity to attack the House of Freedom as being, "connected with the Communist cause" using "Christianity as a basis for attracting young people of radical persuasion to support them..."[6] However, he was not

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[5] *QPD* 269 (28 November, 1975): 2386.
[6] *QPD* 269 (28 November, 1975): 2387.

aware that along with the federal government, his own department had contributed some $7000 to the House of Freedom since 1974. Moreover, the House of Freedom's Board of Reference included then District Court Judge Alan Demack, who the government had commissioned to make a report on youth; Dr Len Knott, a Brisbane psychiatrist, and later President of the Baptist Union of Queensland; another Baptist layman Harry Allsop, sometime principal of the Police Academy and the Rev Ray Hunt, sometime lecturer at the Police Academy, and Labor MLA Keith Wright.[7] The preponderance of Baptist and Methodist members on that board suggests the House of Freedom was at that stage, an evangelical organization, an Australian manifestation of the 'radical evangelicalism' then emerging from traditional evangelicalism in the United States as part of the phenomenon known as the Jesus Movement. Thus, while this particular smear attack may have failed, it was a harbinger of things to come.

III.

The Bjelke-Petersen government was placed under some pressure in the latter half on 1976 by a series of events relating to the administration of the police force.. These events included a controversial police raid on the Cedar Bay hippie commune near Cooktown in far north Queensland resulting in the issue of summonses against a

[7] *QPD* 269 (17 March, 1976): 2844-5.

number of the police involved; interference by Bjelke-Petersen in a decision by then Police Commissioner Ray Whitrod to conduct an inquiry into the alleged bashing a female demonstrator, demands for criminal law reform and finally the resignation of Whitrod in protest against political interference in the running of the Queensland police.[8]

Shortly after the Cedar Bay raid, some sixty clergy and lay people from across the denominational spectrum attended a meeting to express their concerns about what they viewed as the parlous state of civil liberties in Queensland. The group organized a prayer vigil in Brisbane's Roma Street Forum on the evening of October 15, 1976 which was attended by some 700 people. The organizers expressed their concerns,

> ...at a style of government that seems reluctant to listen to voices of dissent.
>
> ...that the rights of the most powerless poor - including the black people of our state - are not being respected.
>
> ...at the failure to take steps to provide impartial [sic] and open inquiry to uncover the truth surrounding incidents which have occurred recently in our state.[8]

From this vigil was formed the organization later known as Concerned Christians.

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[8] These events are well described in Lunn, *Joh* 236-254.
[8] *CM* 15.10.1976.

The vigil created considerable consternation in conservative circles and was the subject of a well organized campaign - inside and outside Parliament - to discredit the organizers and participants. Prominent in the campaign were a number of morals campaigners and their organizations such as the Festival of Light, the Society to Outlaw Pornography (STOP), the Campaign Against Regressive Education (CARE) and the Community Standards Organization (CSO). The day before the vigil both Rona Joyner as director of STOP and CARE, and George Cook, secretary of the Community Standards Organization had letters published in the *Courier-Mail* dissociating their organizations from the vigil.[10] Perhaps their concern was that having monopolized public attention for so long as the defenders of faith and morality through public demonstrations, that the Queensland public would assume their organizations were behind the vigil. That there were others claiming to be Christian, yet with different understandings of what was meant by `faith´ and `morality´ motivated Cook, Joyner and their supporters to action. Joyner conceded this point with her reference to the vigil as demonstrating "a Christian voice which affirms a style of Christianity differing from that of the Premier."[11]

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[10] *CM* 14.10.1976.
[11] *CM* 14.10.1976.

In opposition to the "concerned Christians" there also appeared another group of "concerned Christians" who mounted a "Fair Go for Joh" campaign, using the Christian Mission to the Communist World procession on October 30, 1976 as a rallying point. Bjelke-Petersen and then Senator Neville Bonner addressed this rally. Rally organizer, Robin Sully asserted, "This procession will go on if it rains, but God will not wash it out."[12] Like Joyner, Sully maintained that the Bjelke-Petersen style of Christianity was the only style, and that AWD,

> ...do not represent true Christian standards as does Mr Bjelke-Petersen. He's a great Christian - fair, a thorough gentlemen - and these people fear him because he knows communism and its tactics.[13]

Sully also defended Bjelke-Petersen against allegations of conflict between his public duty and private commercial interests that were current at that time saying, "He is guided by his Christian ethics, and so he cannot go wrong."[14]

On the day of the October 15 prayer vigil, the "Fair Go for Joh" campaign placed a newspaper advertisement which is worthy of more extended discussion. Replete with a photograph of a smiling Bjelke-Petersen, the advertisement was headlined: "DELIBERATE AND MALICIOUS ATTACKS AGAINST OUR PREMIER ARE UNCHRISTIAN".

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[12] *CM* 13.10.1976.
[13] *CM* 13.10.1976.
[14] *CM* 13.10.1976.

The text of the advertisement asserted:

> The Word of God says:
>
> "I exhort therefore, that first of all petitions, prayers, requests, and thanksgivings be offered to God for all men; for kings and all others who are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceful life, in all godliness and honesty."[15]

Bjelke-Petersen's "support for clean, stable Christian government," his "love of God and family, the Crown and the Constitution," and his "Christian leadership which has made Queensland the most successful dynamic and go-ahead State of all," were all given in the advertisement as reasons why,"hundreds of thousands of committed Christians SUPPORT OUR PREMIER."[16] Implicit in the "Fair Go for Joh" campaign are a number of theological assumptions which were to be more widely expressed in the nineteen eighties as neo-pietist influences grew stronger in the religious culture of Queensland.[17] The first assumption is that Bjelke-Petersen, by virtue of his office, was immune from criticism. Moreover, because of the prayers of the people for those in authority - irrespective of the actions of those leaders themselves - peace and harmony will prevail, even if those in

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[15] *CM* 15.10.1976. The person authorizing this advertisement was Les Whykes, who in 1987 stood at Bjelke-Petersen's instigation for the Presidency of the National Party against Sir Robert Sparkes. Whykes' expenses were paid by Kaldeal, the political fund operated by Sir Edward Lyons on Bjelke-Petersen's behalf. *CM* 1.12.1988.
[16] *CM* 15.10.1976. Emphasis in original.
[17] For the rise of neo-pietism in Queensland see Chapter 5.

authority acted unjustly. The importance of `godly government´ was a recurring theme among the neo-pietists in the nineteen eighties, for unlike Luther who is reported to have remarked that he would rather be governed by a competent Turk than an incompetent Christian, the neo-pietists regarded godliness in government as a more important quality than competence.[18]

Secondly, there was the assumption that having a Christian in the seat of power brought material prosperity, a view which we have seen is deeply entrenched in the religious culture of Queensland. Thirdly, the advertisement´s extravagant praise of Bjelke-Petersen, its representation of him as being without blemish, was more kindling for the fires of political messianism, which had smoldered on after the defeat of the Whitlam government, and been fanned by the "Joh´s the Man" theme of the National Party´s advertising in the 1977 state election. The campaign jingle included a stanza:

> He´s a man that you can talk to,
> A man that you can trust,
> A man that stands for what is right,
> For what is true and just.[18]

Ultimately, political messianism and its attendant cult of personality would engulf Bjelke-Petersen in the

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[18] *CM* 31.3.1987.
[18] Lunn, *Joh* 267.

nineteen eighties, and bring about his nemesis after the hubris of the "Joh for PM" campaign.[20]

After the vigil on October 15, the public attacks on AWD and the "concerned Christians" continued, while the parliamentary attack was just beginning. In an address read on his behalf to a Festival of Light rally attended by an estimated 4000 people on October 26, 1976, Bjelke-Petersen (who was attending a Constitutional Convention in Hobart) observed that it was "as difficult today as it was in Roman times to stand up for what was right and good."[21] It was an unfortunate analogy given elements of the cult of personality developing around him, and the fact that his style of government that was under criticism for being too imperial. Nonetheless, Bjelke-Petersen reiterated that his critics were being duped by unnamed "dubious causes".[22]

Guest speaker at the rally was Malcolm Muggeridge, who having met with Bjelke-Petersen the previous day pronounced himself unprepared for, "so honest, so serious, so Christian an encounter," and critical of the clerical malcontents.[23] Not for the first time, the media campaign of intimidation against critics of the government was well orchestrated.

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[20] For fuller discussion of political messianism see Chapter 19.
[21] *CM* 27.10.1976.
[22] *CM* 27.10 1976.
[23] *CM* 26.10.1976.

In the Parliament, the day before the vigil, Bjelke-Petersen in answering a question from his own backbench had said, "I counsel many of the people who are inclined to be deceived by these people - these characters - to be sure they are not deceived."[24] Perhaps unprepared for the question, he then promised:

> I would like some day...to give a run down on most of these so-called Christians, their backgrounds, their association with Communists, and their Left-wing tendencies.[25]

Five days after the vigil, during the public interest debate, Charles Porter delivered on Bjelke-Petersen's promise with a blistering attack on the principal figures involved in AWD.[26] A week later, he was supported by R.J.Hinze, then Minister for Local Government and Main Roads.[27] Porter made a further foray on November 10,[28]and in December, National Party backbenchers Vicki Kippin, Ivan Gibbs and Bob Katter Jnr took up the attack on AWD.[29] Lost amid the sound and fury was the fact that the October 15 vigil had not been organized by AWD!

The anxieties of Porter and Hinze were were two-fold. First, they argued that AWD, and one of its sponsoring bodies, (and note only one) were part of a world-wide communist conspiracy, through the World Council of

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[24] *QPD* 271 (14 October 1976) :922.
[25] *QPD* 271 (14 October 1976): 922.
[26] *QPD* 271 (20 October 1976): 1106.
[27] *QPD* 271 (27 October 1976): 1286.
[28] *QPD* 272 (10 November 1976): 1471.
[29] *QPD* 272 (1 December 1976): 2039 ff.

Churches.[30] Secondly, that unwary church folk might find themselves duped into supporting AWD and kindred organizations, thinking they were religious organizations and not the left-wing pressure groups the honorable members asserted them to be. Porter contended "that a great many people are swept along by the A.W.D. type of emotive rhetoric,"[31] Hinze claimed AWD and "other pseudo-religious groups are...very vocal in support of the hippie drug culture, homosexuality, the anti-police cause, and the plight of the people of East Timor."[32]

Porter claimed to find AWD's place in the Christian tradition "blasphemy" and "satanic",[33] and he claimed to have "deluged" with calls and letters, "the overwhelming majority" thanking him for bringing the issue into "the harsh light of public scrutiny."[34] However, he was also challenged to repeat his remarks outside Parliament, particularly since as he had confused the identity of AWD staff member Sr Joy Madigan with that of Mrs Jan Callinan (nee Madigan).[35]

While careless of the reputation of his adversaries, Porter was particularly protective of Bjelke-Petersen's personal reputation finding it,

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[30] *QPD* 271 (27 October 1976): 1287.
[31] *QPD* 272 (10 November 1976): 1473.
[32] *QPD* 271 (27 October 1976): 1287.
[33] *QPD* 271 (20 October 1976): 1107-8.
[34] *QPD* 271 (10 November 1976): 1472.
[35] *QPD* 271 (20 October 1976): 1106.

> despicable and contemptible that anybody should use the facade of Christian concern to achieve partisan political ends...alleging him to be an un-Christian person. No church, no cleric, serves Christian ends with this type of vitriol. [36]

Porter also revealed something of the motivation behind his attack on AWD:

> The other aim of the AWD is a just sharing of wealth and power, and this is the mealy-mouthed sort of gobbledegook which has always masked the communist aim of beating down freedom for the individual and the free enterprise system.[37]

AWD was not without defenders within and without parliament. Within a week of Porter's initial attack, the Labor MLA for Sandgate, Harold Dean sought to incorporate into Hansard a letter from 46 prominent clergy from the major churches defending AWD. Both Ivan Gibbs and John Goleby, then a prominent Methodist layperson, successfully sought to use the Parliamentary Standing Orders to prevent incorporation of the document into Hansard.[38] The Standing Committee of the Methodist Conference, the Christian Unity Committee of the Presbyterian Church, the Pastoral Council of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane and the Anglican Diocesan Council all passed resolutions of support for AWD.[38] Margaret Cribb recorded that the church leaders were so incensed by the attacks on AWD that that Bjelke-

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[36] *QPD* 272 (10 November 1976): 1473.
[37] *QPD* 271 (20 October 1976): 1107
[38] *QPD* 271 (27 October 1976): 1289 ff.
[38] *QPD* 272 (8 December 1976): 2224-5.

Petersen had to meet privately with them "to effect a reconciliation."[40]

Other tried to mediate. Roman Catholic Archbishop Francis Rush told the Festival of Light rally on October 26,

> it was sad to see a lot of good people who shared in the love of God and the earnest desire to build a free and just society misunderstanding and hurting each other.[41]

Some of the most interesting theological reflection to arise out of the whole imbroglio came from Ed Casey, then independent member for Mackay. Casey told Parliament:

> Those who moved for Christ's crucifixion were the Pharisees and the chief priest - the ones who set themselves up to be the most religious men...
>
> Why did they crucify him? The underlying reason was the fear that they had that his teachings would undermine the power and authority they held over the community at the time. Surely we can draw a parallel with Chief Priest Petersen and Pharisee Porter here today.[42]

On the other hand, Porter, Hinze, Katter and Bjelke-Petersen, like Joyner and Cook, and even Muggeridge, all lacked any sense of a legitimate plurality within the Christian tradition, an inability that could only contribute to the escalation of conflict in the ensuing decade, a conflict not long in coming.

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[40] M.B.Cribb, "Political Chronicle," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 23.1 (April 1977): 93.
[41] *CM* 27.10 1976.
[42] *QPD* 272 (1 December 1976): 2043.

IV.

There had been disquiet among civil libertarians about the state of Queensland's public assembly laws since the beginning of the Vietnam Moratorium demonstrations in 1966. This disquiet became acute when Bjelke-Petersen declared a State of Emergency under the Transport Act in 1971 to control demonstrations against the visiting Springbok rugby team.

In September 1977 following a number of street demonstrations and rallies, and facing the prospect of a concerted campaign by the anti-uranium movement, the Queensland Government amended the Traffic Act to remove the right of appeal to a magistrate against a police decision to refuse a street march permit. There was a blanket ban on protest marches in Queensland from September 1977 until April 1978, when the ban was relaxed slightly. It was relaxed slightly again in July 1979.

What was Bjelke-Petersen's motive in banning street marches? From his statements to the press and parliament at the time, it could be been assumed that his fear of civil disorder, and his determination not to allow any quarter to what he saw as the forces of socialism and communism, motivated him to ban street marches. Certainly within Lutheranism, back as far as Luther, there is a tradition of opposition to protest against the civil government.

However, it is also possible that, recalling the success of the Vietnam Moratorium movement in changing public opinion about the Vietnam war, Bjelke-Petersen was concerned that a successful campaign by the anti-uranium movement might interdict the mining of uranium discovered in Queensland. The anti-uranium protests were designed to put political pressure on the Fraser Government in its handling of the recommendations of the Fox Report into uranium mining. Justice Fox was scheduled to deliver his report at the end of October 1977.[43] Restrictions on uranium mining would retard the development of Queensland, and in Bjelke-Petersen's eyes there could be virtually no greater sin than to leave a God-given resource unexploited.

The political and legal aspects of the street march issue have been well canvassed by others.[44] It is what the conflict reveals about the religious culture that is of interest here. Brennan has well chronicled the involvement of the churches in the public debate, it is proposed in this discussion to focus on several incidents which generated a great deal of disagreement, even conflict, within the various Christian constituencies. These are the resolution on street marches passed by the Uniting Church synod in October 1977, the cancellation of

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[43] *CM* 28.10.1976.
[44] For the political aspects see Fitzgerald, *From 1915* 572 ff; for an outstanding exposition of the legal issues see Frank Brennan, *Too much order*.

the Palm Sunday Procession of Witness in Lent 1978, and the arrest of 13 Concerned Christians in Queen's Park on April 9, 1978. For in these events can be seen not only resistance to the policies of the Bjelke-Petersen regime, but the continuing strength of pietism within the religious culture of Queensland.

V.

Few incidents created as much friction within the Christian constituency of Queensland as the decision of the inaugural synod of the Uniting Church in Queensland to urge the Queensland Government to "alter the law" which has led to "confrontation between dissenting elements of society and the police force," which "leads to loss of respect for the processes of law by both citizens and the police."[45] The resolution continued that the synod,"condemns the policies of persons and groups seeking to increase the polarization of our community" and requested the Heads of Churches to mediate between the Government and the "Human Rights movement," and appointed a deputation to interview the Deputy Commissioner of Police.[46]

The matter arose when several members of the synod, then being held in the Suncorp Theatre, observed a violent clash between police and demonstrators on the steps of

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[45] Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod, *Minutes of the First Synod* (1977): 100.
[46] Uniting Church, *Minutes* (1977): 100.

King George Square on the evening of Wednesday, October 12. They returned to the synod and proposed the resolution cited above; a resolution that sought mediation, and at face value seemed quite even handed.

The synod debated the resolution in closed session on its last day of sitting, October 14. Bjelke-Petersen's response was to accuse the Uniting Church of being under the influence of atheists and communists.[47]

The Uniting Church resolution effectively brought the other churches into the street march debate, but in consequence of Bjelke-Petersen's intemperate response over the intervening weekend, Bjelke-Petersen and not street marches became the issue. On Monday October 17, 1977 Archbishops Arnott and Rush, accompanied by Lutheran Church President Pastor R.J.Mayer and Queensland Council of Churches President R.P.Gresham released the following statement to the media:

> Debate marred by intemperate language contributes nothing to a meeting of minds; it only increases division.
>
> We regret that the sober comments of the Synod of the Uniting Church aroused such an emotional response. Whether one agreed with them or not is beside the point. The point is they deserve sober, mature response.
>
> We believe that it is the role of the church, where it is possible without compromise of principle, to reconcile and not to divide. It is our hope that public debate be conducted with the sobriety and maturity that befit citizens of a freedom-loving democracy. That is all the more necessary when

[47] *CM* 17.10.1977, Australian 17.10.1977.

> impending parliamentary elections tend to inflame passions.
>
> In making such an appeal we speak as men who are detached from party politics but who bow to no one in our love of Queensland and Australia and in our ardent desire for a society in which justice, peace and freedom will prevail.[48]

Cautious and conservative men, they then declined to comment or elaborate further, but note the affirmation of loyalty to state and nation, which in earlier days was so significant a part of the public expressions of ecclesiastical leaders.[49] The day before the statement was released a member of the QCC Executive, Rev Allan Male (a Churches of Christ minister) publicly announced his support for the street march ban, and opined that the QCC would not, "combine with the Uniting Church on the issue."[50]

In defending the synod resolution Uniting Church Moderator Rollie Busch argued the resolution had been put by,

> ... ordinary people, mums and dads and grandads[51]
>
> ...It was not the decision of radical people. The synod would be a very fair cross section of every electorate in Queensland, and of every political party.[52]

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[48] R.A.Busch, "Pastoral Letter," 18.10 1977. Copy in possession of the writer.
[49] For more on this aspect of Queensland's religious culture see Chapters 4 & 5.
[50] *CM* 17.10.1977.
[51] *Australian* 17.10.1977.
[52] *CM* 15.10.1977.

Mindful that a state election was less than four weeks away, Busch also defended the synod against allegations of political partisanship saying,

> the synod is in no way concerned with party politics but it reserves the right as a responsible body in a democratic society to make observations...
>
> ...the debate was largely led by country people who had probably not seen a demonstration before.[53]

Conscious also of rising disquiet in local congregations about the issue, Busch issued a Pastoral Letter, explaining the background to the resolutions:

> ...if the views expressed are still unacceptable to some of our people, this is understood and does not prejudice our essential unity in Christ.[54]

In Toowoomba, one of those who had sponsored the resolution, Chairman of the Presbytery of The Downs, the Rev Aubrey Baker, essayed that,

> The right to march is part of our democracy, and has been used by widely divergent groups. A decade ago American negroes achieved a great deal in this method of protest. More recently in London, the Festival of Light staged a protest against lowering moral standards. A few years ago concerned citizens in Brisbane marched on Parliament House to protest against changes in liquor laws. It is probable that today in Queensland none of these marches could take place.[55]

Baker prefaced his comments with the confession that, "One of the sponsors of the resolution has been a life

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[53] *Australian* 17.10.1977.
[54] Busch, "Pastoral Letter".
[55] quoted *Life & Times* 26.10.1977.

long supporter of the Premier's party," a reference presumably to himself.[56]

Other life long supporters of the Premier's party took a different view. Opening a new road in Bjelke-Petersen's Barambah electorate, Hinze called on church leaders to reconsider their attitude on street marches claiming "responsible, respected and dedicated church people from all over Queensland" had contacted him to express concern at the church leaders' views and to dissociate themselves from the views expressed.[57]

A member of the Toowoomba Uniting Church Parish Council, Charles Rogers publicly criticized the synod decision as "a little disquieting and most misleading."[58] Showing signs of the struggle some lay people had in making the transition from the de facto congregationalist church polity of the past to new forms of polity within the Uniting Church, Rogers argued, "...this question was not discussed at congregational level nor at Parish Council level in the Uniting Church," which "made the statement of no value as a statement of the Uniting Church."[59]

Others also questioned the right of a body such as the synod to make such a statement. A correspondent to *Life and Times*, the Uniting Church newspaper wrote:

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[56] *Life & Times* 26.10.1977.
[57] *CM* 22.10.1977.
[58] *CM* 18.10.1977.
[59] *CM* 18.10.1977

> Delegates of the synod were elected to attend to the business of the church, which is the propagation of the gospel. In its widest sense this does not give the synod authorization to make recommendations to the state government which imply the whole membership of the church is of one mind politically. Politics and government policy are matters for individuals to decide.[60]

A lay person from Kingaroy argued, "Surely the views of church members should be sought before any major statement is ever issued,"[61] and yet another lay person - this time from Toowoomba - asserted that if all the demonstrators were Christians, "they wouldn't be out there protesting against the law."[62]

Another correspondent from Wooroolin near Kingaroy granted the synod the right to deplore confrontation between police and demonstrators, but denied the synod's right,

> to enter the political arena, by publicly announcing on behalf of the members of the Uniting Church...that it opposes a certain law and requests its alteration.[63]

However, a careful reading of the texts of both the Uniting Church synod resolution of October 14 and the Heads of Churches statement of October 17 shows that the purpose of both statements is mediation and

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[60] E.E.McLean (New Farm), Letters To The Editor *Life & Times* 26.10.1977.
[61] D.Krosch (Kingaroy), Letters To The Editor *Life & Times* 26.10.1977.
[62] John S.Stimson (Toowoomba), Letters To The Editor *Life & Times* 9.11.1977.
[63] Helen Blythemann (Wooroolin), Letters To The Editor *Life & Times* 23.11.1977)

reconciliation. While it was the very even-handedness of the statements that upset Bjelke-Petersen and his supporters, there is irony in the opposition of church people to the irenic intentions of their presidents, bishops and councils.

The emotional temperature of the church constituency was further raised when, a week after the synod's decision, over 400 people were arrested following an anti-uranium rally in King George Square. With a long tradition of tabloid hyperbole to maintain, the *Sunday Sun* newspaper styled the event: "CITY'S WORST RIOT"[64] reportage which did little for the digestion of many conservative church people. Prominent in the front row of the marchers, but not arrested, were a number of men wearing clerical collars.

When sixteen Anglican, Catholic and Uniting clergy wrote complaining to the Governor about police tactics during the demonstration, Bjelke-Petersen responded, "Clergymen should be preaching the gospel rather than being involved in street marches."[65]

VI.

The efforts of the Uniting Church synod were to no avail, but a slight relaxation of the street march ban in April 1978 did follow several months later after the churches

[64] *Sunday Sun* 23.10.1977.
[65] *Australian* 26.10.1977.

cancelled the annual Palm Sunday Procession of Witness through Brisbane streets. The ecumenical procession normally attracted some 5000 people. Sure that the procession would be granted a permit, organizers' spokesman Anglican Bishop Ralph Wicks contended that, "as Christians we did not want to appear specially favoured against people wanting to hold processions for other reasons."[66]

Cancellation of the procession infuriated Bjelke-Petersen who, called it "plain silly." He alleged the cancellation gave comfort to communists and atheists in the civil liberties movement and called upon the organizers to re-consider their decision.[67] Bjelke-Petersen's outrage was caused no doubt by the challenge posed to his position that it was only the radical left who were banned from the street, and that traditional processions like Labor Day and Anzac Day could continue unaffected. Cancellation of the Palm Sunday procession also brought the Liberal Party organization into the debate about the style of government in Queensland, with Party President Yvonne McComb telling the Darling Downs regional conference of the Party, "Church leaders are very close to the community. Sometimes...our politicians are not as close to the community."[68] But the Liberal organization was swiftly rebuffed by Bjelke-Petersen using the

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[66] *CM* 6.3.1978.
[67] *CM* 7.3.1978.
[68] *CM* 19.3.1978.

familiar rhetoric about giving comfort to communists and socialists. Liberal backbenchers were also concerned. One, Bruce Bishop (MLA for Surfers Paradise) argued during a Matters of Public Interest debate that philosophically Liberalism could not countenance such restrictions on individual freedom, and he quoted Edmund Burke in support of his argument. As his speech progressed the following exchange took place between Bishop and Bob Moore, Liberal MLA for Windsor.

> Mr. BISHOP: "...The basis of all liberalism is belief in the right of individual liberty."
>
> Mr. Moore: Ours is a conservative party, not a liberal party in that sense.
>
> Mr BISHOP: If the honourable member just listens to this, he might change his mind and open it a bit.
>
> ...I believe therefore, in the minimum of state intervention and control.[68]

Given the failure of some Members of Parliament to recognize their own philosophical tradition when it was presented to them, it is little wonder that Parliament should have proved such an ineffective brake on the excesses of the Executive, and that an extra-parliamentary institution like the church should find itself not only responsible for the cure of souls but also for the care of the liberties of the citizen. Not surprisingly, when Moore later lost Liberal Party pre-selection he joined the National Party.

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[68] *QPD* 274 (19 April 1978): 458.

VII.

Further public debate occurred about the relationship between the Christian and the state when thirteen clergy and lay people under the banner of "Concerned Christians" were arrested in Queen's Park, Brisbane, on April 12, 1977. The subject of the protest was the plight of the Aboriginal people of Aurukun and Mornington Island, who were at that time engaged in a bitter battle with the Queensland Government over the future of their communities.[70] After a worship service in King George Square, the group of about 80 processed to George Street in twos and threes under the direction of the police. The group gathered in Queen's Park opposite the offices of the state Department for Aboriginal and Islander Advancement. Having been instructed by police to cease singing, humming and whistling, the group were then instructed that they were blocking the footpath. Thirteen were arrested, mainly for having refused to obey a police direction. Three of their number, Uniting Church minister Denis Conomos and Anglican priests Ron March and Ron Henderson refused bail and spent the night in the Brisbane Watchouse.[71]

When Parliament resumed for the week on Tuesday, April 11, R.E.Camm, Minister for Police, defended the actions

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[70] This dispute is more fully described in Chapters 13 & 14.
[71] *CM* 10.4.1978.

of the police.[72] The Government was embarrassed by the public perception of the case, which held that the Queen's Park Thirteen had been arrested simply for singing hymns in a public place, a perception calculated to bring the street march legislation into even greater disrepute. Furthermore, despite the fact that the cases were before the courts, the Special Branch report on the case was made available to the press.[73]

The Queensland Council of Churches, under whose auspice Conomos held his appointment as University Chaplain, after hearing Conomos' version of events resolved to dissociate themselves from his actions, "in refusing a lawful request from a police officer...and forcing a confrontation with the police,"[74] despite the fact that Conomos' case was still before the courts and that on May 2, 1978, Evans SM found Conomos not guilty.[75] After hearing the case of another of the Concerned Christians, Evans SM disqualified himself from further hearings on the grounds that the police case was "tainted."[76]

The arrests also brought forth the now familiar arguments from church people that their clergy should, "pay more

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[72] *QPD* 274 (11 April, 1978): 212.
[73] *CM* 12.4.1977
[74] *Life & Times* 26.4.1978.
[75] Brennan 219-220. According to McGregor-Lowndes the resolution was never rescinded, nor was any apology made to Conomos. Myles McGregor-Lowndes, "Concerned Christians and their involvement in the dispute," *Trinity Occasional Papers* IV.2 (1985): 75.
[76] Brennan 220.

attention to the job for which they were ordained, and leave the Government to do the job for which they were elected."[77] Exactly what the clergy were ordained for, and the government elected for remained unsaid, as if the respective roles of each were accepted and understood by all. Others, including the Harristown Uniting Church Elders Council in Toowoomba, buttressed their views with biblical quotations, such as the Pauline injunction to the Romans to obey the civil authority.[78] One Uniting Church clergyman offered the view that:

> My Bible tells me that Jesus not only avoided, but refused to be drawn into such acts of confrontation against the very much more oppressive Roman Government of the day; nor did He use the pulpit to incite opposition to that Government. His only violent act was against the actual persons who used the temple for extortion and robbery against sincere worshippers.[79]

His views were supported by other clergy and lay people, [80]and significantly an apparently disproportionate number of those who opposed the doctrine of resistance came from the South Burnett and Toowoomba, places where evangelical pietism remained strong.

Such debate about the role and the representative character of the "Concerned Christians" provided the

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[77] A.Jensen (Yandina), Letters To The Editor *Life & Times* 26.4.1978; Wondai Uniting Church Parish Council, Letters To The Editor *Life & Times* 24.5.1978.
[78] John S.Stimson and P.Rossiter (Toowoomba) Letters To The Editor *Life & Times* 26.4.1978.
[79] *Life & Times* 10.5.1978.
[80] A.R.Lane (Chinchilla), Letters To The Editor *Life & Times* 26.4.1978.

group with the opportunity to spell out the theological principles undergirding their actions:

> We support those who question and test existing unjust laws. Under extreme circumstances defiance of a bad law on the basis of a higher law can be justified.[81]

Specifically on the right to march issue, the Concerned Christians submitted to members of the state parliament that, "By any criterion, the changes to the march law have breached fundamental principles of justice almost universally accepted in the western world."[82]

In an article written in his own defence, Conomos countered the argument that Christ was politically quiescent:

> The prophets rebuked the authorities of their day for injustice. Jesus did too. And he did not stop at mere words. When the occasion demanded he was prepared to engage in his own `civil disobedience'. He broke one of the strictest laws of his day by healing on the sabbath. He drove the money changers out of the Temple. His ministry had enough political content for him to be condemned to death as a Zealot by the Romans.[83]

The government attacks on AWD and the Concerned Christians in the years 1976-78 were essentially reactive. The established verities were under challenge. The long accommodation between the Christian religion and government in Australia, which could be traced back as far as Richard Johnson's appointment as Chaplain to the

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[81] *Life & Times* 10.5.1978.
[82] *Life & Times* 10.5.1978.
[83] D.Conomos, "Why civil disobedience," *Life & Times* 24.5.1978.

First Fleet, was dissolving. Certainly not since Mannix and the conscription debates had there been such intensity of conflict between church and state. Moreover, the street march issue brought the Concerned Christians group to public attention as an ecumenical coalition of people who sought not simply to express their solidarity with other citizens seeking the restoration of what they viewed as basic civil liberties, but who also offered a theological, rather than political, critique of the policies and philosophies of Bjelke-Petersen and his government and to the prevailing pietist status quo. As much as any group, the Concerned Christians represented an expression of the doctrine of resistance in the politics of Queensland during the Bjelke-Petersen years. The Aurukun-Mornington Island dispute was to carry that expression from a small group to an entire denomination.

CHAPTER 13

AURUKUN: A CLASH OF CULTURES

No one in a city as far away from Aurukun as Canberra would know all the facts about it.

Joh Bjelke-Petersen 1976.[1]

I.

The dispute between the Queensland Government and the Presbyterian, and later the Uniting Church, over the Aurukun and Mornington Island Aboriginal people's right to self determination was the most substantial and sustained conflict between church and state during the Bjelke-Petersen years. The Aurukun-Mornington Island conflict was also a conflict between two, possibly three worldviews, each claiming Christian foundations. For after nearly three quarters of a century of missionary influence, the Aboriginal communities professed to be Christian, as did the Uniting Church and Bjelke-Petersen and his Government. This chapter focuses on the background to that conflict; the following chapter with the conflict itself.

Most accounts of the Aurukun-Mornington Island dispute do not concede the essentially religious character of the conflict. Some accounts view the conflict as part of the

[1] *CM* 19.4.1976.

political conflict over states rights and federalism, and the conflict is a legitimate historical case study of that.[2] Political commentator Margaret Cribb referred to the conflict as, "this latest crisis in federal-state relations", although Cribb did note that the end result left the issue of Aboriginal land rights unresolved.[3] Aboriginal land rights has been seen as the key issue in the by others commentators such as Ross Fitzgerald.[4] The account of Janine Roberts in *From massacres to mining - The colonization of Aboriginal Australia*, an account written from an Aboriginal perspective, also views land rights as the key to the conflict.[5]

Colin Tatz drew attention to the multifarious and nefarious aspects of the Aurukun-Mornington Island conflict with his observation that the conflict had,

> more faces and facets than bauxite; it is more than an illustration of the industrial consensus that more is better, that mining is the yardstick of man's progress. It is a complex of racism, ambiguity, alienation, coercion, doubletalk, diminution of rights - of profound pessimism when politics, law and white men fail fragile black communities.[6]

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[2] L.Ryan, "Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders," in Patience 122.
[3] Political Chronicle, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 24.3 (Dec 1978):372.
[4] Ross Fitzgerald, *From 1915* 538.
[5] J.Roberts, *From massacres to mining. The colonization of Aboriginal Australia* (London: War On Want, 1978) 133.
[6] Colin Tatz, *Race Politics in Australia: Aborigines, politics and law* (Armidale, NSW: UNE Publishing Unit, 1979) 66.

This account will focus on the Aurukun-Mornington Island imbroglio as a conflict of contrasting religious worldviews. This clash of cultures is seen quite starkly in the transcripts of a meeting between the Aurukun Shire Council and Queensland Government ministers Bjelke-Petersen, Porter (Aboriginal Affairs) and Hinze (Local Government) in August 1978, six months after the Queensland Government moved to takeover the communities.

The meeting was between the three Cabinet Ministers and the Aboriginal councillors alone. A representative of the Federal Government and the Aurukun people's legal advisor had been ejected from the meeting by Bjelke-Petersen backed by his police.[7]

In the transcript, Francis Yunkaporta interrupts Bjelke-Petersen and Acting Shire Chairman Barry Ngakyankwokka:

> Excuse me. We are a bit upset that you abolished the two reserves. We all here know about God don't we?
>
> Premier: Yes.
>
> Yunkaporta: But we believe that the land is ours, this land. You are the Crown of this land but we are from the ground. We are the people of the ground. . . and we are asking you as the Premier, why can't you give us back that land, our own tribal land? Can't you give us that?
>
> Premier: The simple problem is first of all . . . there would be a lot of people exploit you much more than they do today if you had the land. The second

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[7] Transcripts of Queensland Government meetings with Aurukun Shire Council and Community, 11 August, 1978, Box 14 (851102-3), R.A.Busch Collection, Fryer Library, University of Queensland (Typescript, 12 pp): 1.

> thing in the state of Queensland nobody else gets land like that. They buy it.[8]

Bjelke-Petersen's response to Yunkaporta is full of ironies. First, he misses or ignores Yunkaporta's attempt to find common ground in their mutual Christian faith. This is consistent with Bjelke-Petersen's particular understanding of Lutheranism. To his mind, the Christian faith had nothing to do with the issue. For the Aboriginal people such a dichotomy was inconceivable; for them the totality of life was religious.

Secondly, there is Bjelke-Petersen's comment that giving the land back would result in greater exploitation of the Aboriginal people. Bjelke-Petersen explicitly, but probably unintentionally, acknowledges that the Aurukun people are being exploited. From the Aboriginal perspective it is difficult to imagine a more gross form of exploitation than to have the earth, in which the meaning and purpose in life itself are grounded, extracted by mining operations and exported for material gain by others.

Thirdly, Bjelke-Petersen's comment that people are not given land but must buy it, must stand alongside his Government's consistent refusal to sanction the purchase of the Archer River pastoral lease east of Aurukun by a group of Winchinam Aborigines in 1976-77. John Koowarta

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[8] Transcripts 3-4.

on behalf of the group successfully sued the Queensland Government under the 1985 Racial Discrimination Act, with the case being resolved in the High Court in 1982.[8]

II.

The public perception of the Aurukun and Mornington Island conflict in 1978 is that it blew up overnight. The speed with which the Queensland Government acted to take over the Uniting Church-run Aboriginal mission communities surprised the Church, but the origins of the conflict lie thirty years before in the discovery of bauxite on the western coast of the Cape York Peninsula.

Mornington Island had been founded as an Aboriginal mission in 1914, Aurukun south of Weipa, some ten years before in 1904. The two missions were part of a string of missions established on the Western side of Cape York Peninsula by the Presbyterian and Anglican Churches.

The first station established was Mapoon, commenced in 1891, under the auspices of the Griffith Government. The missionaries were mainly German Moravians recruited by the Presbyterian Church. Weipa was established in 1898. Griffith's motivation in seeking to establish the missions lay in attempting to control the illegal use of Aboriginal labor in the Torres Strait commercial fishing

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[8] Ross Fitzgerald, *From 1915* 538-39.

industry, and in seeking to ameliorate the influences of European civilization on Cape York Aborigines generally.

From the beginning, extractive industry, whether commercial fishing, sandalwood cutting or mining was the key problem facing the Aboriginal people of Cape York.[10] Mapoon was closed in 1963, against the will of the Aboriginal people, but with the consent of the Presbyterian Church. It was closed on the grounds that its climate, soil and vegetation made it an unsuitable site for a settlement. The church official responsible for mission administration from 1953 to 1977, J.R.Sweet subsequently expressed regret that at,

> Mapoon and Weipa the Church never gave sufficient support to the Aborigines' claim of their spiritual link with the land. In the Mapoon crisis we negotiated for their future <u>against</u> them WITH [original emphases] the government. In retrospect, I believe the closure of Mapoon was wrong.[11]

This sense of guilt and regret was one of the factors that motivated the Uniting Church's strong response to Bjelke-Petersen's attempt to takeover Aurukun and Mornington Island in 1978.

Another factor which led to the Aurukun-Mornington Island conflict was the degree of bureaucratic continuity which prevailed in the Queensland Government's administration

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[10] For the history of conflicts between church and state, Aborigines and extractive industry in the early years see J.Harrison, "Missions, Fisheries and Government," unpublished B.A. thesis, University of Queensland, 1974.

[11] *Life & Times*, 30.9.1981.

of Aboriginal affairs. From 1914 until 1984 only three public servants headed the Queensland Government department dealing with Aborigines. From 1914 to 1942, the departmental head was J.W.Bleakley. He was succeeded by his Deputy Director, Con O'Leary who remained until 1963. P.J.Killoran succeeded O'Leary in 1963, retiring in 1984.[12]

Killoran was one of four key Queensland Government players in the Aurukun-Mornington Island conflict. Shortly before he retired, Killoran nominated as the National Party candidate for the state seat of Cook in the 1983 election. Normally a Labor seat, Cook covered the topmost part of the state and includes a considerable number of Aboriginal and Islander electors. Both Killoran and the National Party machine felt that his long association with Aboriginal people in the region offered an electoral advantage. Killoran took leave from his position to campaign, ultimately unsuccessfully, in Cook. The appointment of Bob Katter Jnr as Minister after the breakdown of the coalition in 1983 saw the end of Killoran's reign. The new minister, a North Queenslander, had his own ideas of how to administer the department. Through his close association with Bjelke-Petersen, Killoran attempted to have the premier assert his authority over Katter, but the minister stood his ground, and Killoran retired.

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[12] *SM* 16.3.1975.

III.

Apart from Bjelke-Petersen, the other key Queensland Government figures in the conflict were Cabinet Ministers Charles Porter and Russ Hinze. Porter is best described as a political ideologue. Although a Liberal member of parliament, Porter was closer to the political philosophy of the new National Party. He had been a political organizer since 1944, when he was general secretary of the Queensland People's Party, predecessor of the modern Liberal Party. He became the first state secretary of the Liberal Party in 1949, and occupied the position from 1957 until his entry into Parliament in 1966 as member for Toowong.[13] Although a long time member of the Liberal ginger group disaffected with the subservient position of the Liberal Party in the coalition Government, Porter was appointed Minister for Aboriginal and Islander Affairs after the 1977 election. He held the portfolio until his retirement at the 1980 election. He was subsequently involved in moves to establish a new conservative political movement in Queensland, and remained close to Bjelke-Petersen in retirement. Before his elevation to ministerial office, Porter had functioned as a public hatchet man for the Government on a number of controversial issues, as discussed in the previous chapter. In the light of the remarks he made as

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[13] D.B.Waterson & John Arnold, *Biographical register of the Queensland parliament 1930-1980* (Canberra: ANU Press, 1982) 76.

backbencher in 1976, Porter was unlikely, by 1978, to have developed sympathy for the aspirations of indigenous people for self determination. Indeed, public comments Porter made on his appointment to the portfolio in 1977 upset Aboriginal leaders, but Bjelke-Petersen made no move to reprimand his new minister.[14]

R.J.Hinze (b. 1919) first entered politics when elected to the Albert Shire Council in 1952, became chairman in 1958, and remained chairman until 1967. In 1966 he was elected to state parliament and he became Minister for Main Roads and Local Government in 1974, portfolios he retained until 1988. Police and Racing were subsequently added in 1980 - earning Hinze the sobriquet, "Minister for Everything" - although the police portfolio was passed to W.M.Glasson in December 1982.[15]

Hinze's electorate, South Coast, included the verdant Coomera and Pimpama valleys first settled by German farmers in the nineteenth century,[16] an area populated during the Bjelke-Petersen years by, "wealthy South Coast farmers of German descent and National Party inclination."[17] Like Bjelke-Petersen, Hinze emerged

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[14] Political Chronicle, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 24.1 (Apr 1978):94.
[15] Waterson and Arnold 43-44.
[16] For the history of Lutheran settlement in this region see M.Jenner ed., *Bethania - the early years* (Bethania, Qld: Bethania 125 Committee, 1989).
[17] Murray Hogarth and Tracey Aubin, "Hinze's land of milk and money," *Sydney Morning Herald* 3.12.1988.

from a childhood bound by poverty. According to his wife, Fay:

> He had nothing to start with himself. He began working on his father's dairy farm without wages. Sometimes if there was a little heifer going to market he would be allowed to keep the profits. That was all.[18]

Hinze subsequently became an influential figure in the dairy industry as a breeder of Friesians, and as chairman of the South Coast Co-operative Dairy Association. Over the years he expanded his dairying interests to include extractive industry and later property development.

Like Bjelke-Petersen, Hinze came from a religious background strongly influenced by evangelical pietism. He was a Methodist, in a district already well leavened by Lutheranism.[18] "I have been a committed Christian all my life - indeed at one period I was secretary of my local church for many years," he told parliament in 1976.[20] His subsequent career as probed by the Fitzgerald Inquiry also revealed him to be susceptible to the influence and blandishments of property developers.[21] By one account Hinze or his wife Fay received $4.14 million by way of "loans, gifts, benefits and payments" from developers.[22] His associations made

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[18] Hogarth and Aubin.
[18] Dingle 231.
[20] *QPD* 271 (27.10.1976)1286.
[21] Ross Fitzgerald, *From 1915* 103ff.
[22] *Sydney Morning Herald* 3.12.1988.

it unlikely he would be empathetic towards the aspirations of Aboriginal people.

IV.

As early as August 1975, Killoran had warned the Presbyterian Church agency responsible for the mission communities, BOEMAR (The Board of Ecumenical Missions and Relations)[23] that the Queensland Cabinet had expressed its concern at the Church's "apparent intent. . . to development the communities under a philosophy inconsistent with Queensland's established policies."[24] Within a year he reiterated the Government's concern. Killoran wrote of,

> disquieting information. . . in connection with what is described as an `Aurukun decentralization programme' in which number of people would move. . . in an endeavour to settle certain areas of land with which some traditional affiliations would be claimed.[25]

Killoran was referring to the `outstation movement', under which Aborigines who had been gathered for decades in mission compounds began to return to their traditional lands. This process was supported by the Church and by Federal Government funds.[26]

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[23] Responsibility for mission administration became that of the Uniting Church upon its formation in June 1977.
[24] Uniting Church in Australia, Division of World Mission, "Aurukun & Mornington Island Dairy of Events 25th August 1975 to 6th September, 1978," Typescript, 8 pp.
[25] Roberts 211, reprints the letter in full.
[26] Patience 121.

Killoran noted that legal action could be taken to restrict the outstation movement, and continued,

> If, contrary to Queensland Government policy, such a programme is being developed, radiating from Aurukun the traditional land settlement then immediate action should be taken to conform with Queensland policy and familiarize the Aboriginal council and people as to the illegality and social inadvisability of the decentralization process.[27]

Here a cause of later conflict is established. The Aboriginal people were seeking to return to their traditional lands. In this they were supported by the Church. This support did not come by way of lofty resolutions from church courts and committees, it came as part of the management of the communities. The Presbyterian Church was permitting a degree of self-management. The Queensland Government, on the other hand wished to maintain the policy of assimilation.

V.

In between Killoran's two letters, in December 1975, the Queensland Government had guillotined through the Legislative Assembly the Aurukun Associates Agreement Act, which allowed an international consortium to mine bauxite on land within the Aurukun Aboriginal Reserve.

The consortium at that time consisted of Tipperary Land Corporation, a US company with 40% ownership, Billiton Aluminum Australia BV, a subsidiary of the Anglo-Dutch

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[27] Roberts 211.

oil giant, Shell with 40% ownership and Aluminum Pechiney Holdings, a French mining company with 20% ownership. The proposed mining lease was 1905 sq km, of which 1,800 sq km were within the Aurukun Aboriginal Reserve, which had a total area of 7,703 sq kms.[28] The bill comprised two separate agreements between the joint venturers and the Queensland Government, one relating to mining, the other relating to the treatment of the Aboriginal people. Such franchise agreements were consistent with the Bjelke-Petersen Government's corporatist mode of dealing with large mining or tourist developments in one package.

The second agreement - between the Director of Aboriginal and Island Affairs and the joint venturers - required payment of award rates to Aborigines employed on the project, encouragement of Aborigines to participate in the mining operation, payment of a royalty of 3% of net profits to the Director from the third year of operation, adequate notice of the area to be mined, and a range of conditions which purported to protect,

> the inviolate rights of Aborigines to live subject and according to the law, custom, religion and established practices of their respective tribes.[29]

In particular the joint venturers were to dismiss any employee guilty of offensive or sacreligious conduct towards the Aborigines and "respect and leave undisturbed

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[28] *QPD* 269 (2.12.1975) 2409.
[29] *QPD* 269 (2.12.1975) 2410-2411.

any Aboriginal relics and sacred sites on the reserve".[30] The Minister did not make it clear for whose benefit these altruistic provisions were included in the agreement. Apparently neither Porter and his departmental officers nor the mining companies recognized that the very nature of the mining operation would void this last clause. If they did recognize it, a very cynical deception was being practised.

The Presbyterian Church's major objection was that there had been no consultation with either the Church or the Aboriginal people of Aurukun. Its national weekly, *Australian Presbyterian Life* said that announcement of the plan on November 21, 1975 "came as a complete surprise to officials responsible for the Presbyterian mission there."[31] The report continued,

> News of the plan for a profit sharing deal with the Aborigines was made public. . . by the Queensland Minister for Mines. But the Presbyterian Board for Overseas Mission and Ecumenical Relations [sic] declared it had no knowledge of any arrangement with the Aurukun people.[32]

This was not true. Since at least 1968 the Presbyterian Church had been negotiating with the Queensland Government and the agreement that Mines Minister Ron Camm brought before the Legislative Assembly was based on negotiations conducted in 1968. Those involved in the negotations were Killoran, as Director of Aboriginal and

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[30] *QPD* 269 (2.12.1975) 2410-2411.
[31] *Australian Presbyterian Life* 3.12.1975.
[32] *Australian Presbyterian Life* 3.12.1975.

Island Affairs; the then President of Tipperary Land Corporation which was the sole holder of the Authority to Prospect; BOEMAR treasurer Sam Edenborough; Aurukun mission manager, the Rev John Gillanders and, Camm told Parliament, "the Council and elders of the Aborigines at the reserve."[33] The agreement, Camm said, "documents certain letter agreements which confirmed certain arrangements made,"[34] by the parties indicated above. Certainly the consultation had not been recent. Gillanders left Aurukun in 1971, four years before. J.R.Sweet, Presbyterian Church missions director in Queensland said no negotiations had taken place since 1971[35] but several days later Edenborough publicly referred to a letter from Bjelke-Petersen dated June 26, 1973, which Edenborough said gave assurances that,

> decisions likely to lead to mining. . . on the Reserve will be made in consultation with the Aurukun councillors and the people of Aurukun.[36]

Among the Presbyterians there was some confusion, and one suspects, some dissembling.

Edenborough said that the possibility of legal action was being examined over the implication that he and Gillanders had been parties to an agreement with Tipperary. It appears that in reality Edenborough and Gillanders had made certain agreements with Killoran and

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[33] *QPD* 269 (2.12.1975) 2410.
[34] *QPD* 269 (2.12.1975) 2410.
[35] *CM* 27.11.1975.
[36] *CM* 4.12.1975 and CM 26.11.1975.

Tipperary without adequate consultation with the Aboriginal people, and that they made commitments on behalf of the Aurukun people. Immediately after the Bill was introduced Edenborough called for its withdrawal on the grounds that a vital clause in the 1968 agreement had been omitted. It was a clause providing for further negotiations between Tipperary, the mission and the community to "ensure adequate safeguards and compensation in the interests of the Aboriginal people."[37]

The Aborigines were certainly aware of the possibility of mining; the prospecting was taking place before their eyes. In the intervening seven years since 1968, considerable changes had taken place in the attitudes of church mission administrators. Whereas the Church acted on behalf of the Aborigines in negotiating the Comalco agreement and the closure of Mapoon mission in the nineteen fifties and early nineteen sixties,[38] they now recognized it was inappropriate for them so to do in the mid nineteen seventies in the light of emerging Aboriginal aspirations for self management which were supported by the Church.[39] This could explain the public breast beating by Presbyterian Church officials. For example the Presbyterian Church called a meeting for

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[37] *CM* 4.12.1975.
[38] "Aborigines and Islanders at Weipa. Notes on background and current position," (Melbourne: Comalco Ltd, 1978) 6.
[39] Sweet acknowledged this in 1981, *Life & Times*, 30.9.1981.

clergy of all denominations to clear up "misrepresentation and misunderstanding of the . . . crisis."[40] Sweet said," The church has been getting a dreadful deal. . . We feel the whole situation is not being put to the public."[41]

Edenborough said that BOEMAR and the Aurukun Aboriginal community were "determined at all costs to avoid another Weipa where [the Aborigines]. . . were dispossessed of all but 303 acres of their reserve."[42] However, this contradicts a statement in the same newspaper report by Sweet that, "when the Comalco agreement was being negotiated . . . the church and the Aboriginal community had been consulted at all stages. But not with this one."[43] The disparity between the two statements may be explained by the fact that while consulted, and involved in the negotiations, the church officials had been ineffective advocates on behalf of the Aboriginal people. Sweet gives credence to this proposition with his comment in 1981 that,

> In the Weipa crisis, when we failed in our claims on their behalf, they [the Aboriginal people] were placed in the invidious position of having to trust the Church's report on what had happened.[44]

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[40] *CM* 8.12.1975.
[41] *CM* 8.12.1975.
[42] *CM* 27.11.1978.
[43] *CM* 27.11.1978.
[44] *Life & Times* 30.9.1981.

Ross Fitzgerald concludes that one important reason for the failure of resistance on the part of the Presbyterian Church was its dependence on Government funding.[45]

VI.

Edenborough's motives aside, there were legitimate concerns about the hurried passage of the Bill. No Queensland Government minister or official ever gave a public explanation for the speed of the Bill's passage. Janine Roberts viewed its timing as suspicious coming "within two weeks of the overthrow of the Whitlam Government".[46] It is possible that reduction of the Federal Government requirements for Australian equity in such projects from 100% to 50% may have made the Aurukun project more feasible. Lawyer for the Aurukun people, Frank Purcell said, "This is the old, old story of 'go ahead and do it', pass the Act through Parliament, and talk to the people afterwards."[47] Brisbane's Roman Catholic Archbishop Francis Rush thought the hasty passage of the legislation, "regrettable" in the first instance because it "deeply affected the lives of people," and "all the more regrettable when it happens in a political atmosphere already overcharged with emotion."[48] The *Courier-Mail* editorialized that the Queensland Government should not rush to get Royal Assent

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[45] Ross Fitzgerald, *From 1915* 514.
[46] Roberts 131.
[47] *Australian Presbyterian Life* 3.12.1975.
[48] *CM* 8.12.1975.

for the Bill because of its hasty passage arguing that the Aurukun Aborigines should be given time to understand what is going on.[48] The reaction of the Aurukun people reported in the *Courier-Mail* news pages demonstrated that the Aborigines, conscious of the experience of the Weipa, knew only too well what was going on.[50] The Aurukun elders issued a Supreme Court writ seeking to halt the project,[51] and a petition signed according to Sweet by "almost all adults on Aurukun"[52] was presented to Parliament opposing the mining venture.

The *Courier-Mail* editorial then concluded, "On the face of it there could be some advantages for them in bauxite mining, but these would have to be balanced against any disadvantages and possibly injustices,"[53] thereby showing considerable ignorance of the true state of affairs.

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[48] *CM* 8.12.1975.
[50] *CM* 11.12.1975.
[51] *CM* 3.12.1975.
[52] *CM* 22.12.1975.
[53] *CM* 9.12.1975.

VII.

Apart from unseemly haste and lack of consultation, the Presbyterian Church had second thoughts about the three percent royalty it had negotiated on behalf of the Aboriginal people. Sweet gave an ingenious reason for the Church's change of mind. He was quoted as saying that the Church had been happy with the 3% royalty when it was negotiated in 1968, but at that stage only one corporation, Tipperary, was involved. The situation was changed by the involvement of overseas companies in the consortium and that it was possible for multi-national companies to show no profit on a particular operation.

There was also public disputation about to whom the royalty was being paid. The Act provided that it be paid to Killoran for the benefit of all Queensland Aborigines. During the debate on the Bill in Parliament, Claude Wharton, the Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs, revealed that in November, the previous month, he had received a letter from the Aurukun Council requesting that management of the community be transferred to the Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement (DAIA). Dated the 18th of November, 1975, the letter had been signed by all the community councillors - Donald Peinkinna, Geraldine Kowangka, Fred Kerindun, Bruce Yunkaporta and John Koowarta - and was delivered to Killoran by an unnamed deputation of three representing

the council, the church elders and the [Aboriginal] police. It said *inter alia*,

> The Council now feels that it is time for the church to look after the religious side still, but the running of the community should be looked after by the Department. . .The people will not listen to the Council of Aurukun or the manager because they have been told by BOEMAR that the BOEMAR manager has to listen to them. We need the strength of the DAIA to stand behind the manager and the council.[54]

The Presbyterian Church, in moving away from the policy of protection to self-determination was reaping the whirlwind sown by sixty years of paternalism. The whirlwind was likely to be strongest at Aurukun which was just emerging from the long and autocratic reign from 1925 to 1965 of mission superintendent Bill MacKenzie.

The letter also pinpointed one of the deficiencies of the policy of assimilation; the difficulty faced by Aboriginal police in enforcing European law among their own kin. The Aurukun councillors told Wharton:

> We need a European policeman stationed here. . . Because of the kinship ties and relationships it makes it very hard for the Aboriginal police to do a good job.[55]

Wharton also quoted Killoran's response. Killoran did not commit himself on the request for DAIA management but replied to Peinkinna that a great deal of consultation and discussion with both the Aborigines and the Church was required on the question.[56] The effect of Wharton's

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[54] *QPD* 269 (2.12.1975) 2409.
[55] *QPD* 269 (4.12.1975) 2542.
[56] *QPD* 269 (4.12.1975) 2543.

making public the Aurukun people's concerns was to further damage the credibility of the Presbyterian Church. The real obstacle to the Aurukun Associates Agreement in the mind of Killoran and Wharton was the Presbyterian Church. The views and opinions of six hundred Aborigines over 1200 km away could be massaged and manipulated, but Sweet's declaration that, "a deprived and powerless people must be supported by the Church. That is the Church's function,"[57] marked the Church as the Government's real opponent.

Other highlights of the debate included a display of self importance by the Government Member for Isis, Lin Powell who said;

> As an elder of the Presbyterian Church, I find it strange that until today no member of that church who is concerned with the issue has approached me to speak to the Minister on his behalf or on behalf of the Aurukun mission." [58]

In response, the Labor MLA for Rockhampton Keith Wright interjected, "They only found out a few days ago that something was happening. They were as surprised as everyone else."[59] Powell did have a point. The Church had failed to inform and brief MLAs, especially Government MLAs like Powell, who might be persuaded to be sympathetic to the Aboriginal cause. Powell for instance

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[57] *CM* 22.12.1975.
[58] *QPD* 269 (4.12.1975) 2543.
[58] *QPD* 269 (4.12.1975) 2543.

said of the Aurukun people, "They are being manipulated, and perhaps from two sides."[60]

The other highlight of the debate was the second reading speech by Keith Wright. Unlike Powell, Wright had been briefed by the Church - whether at his initiative or the Church's is unclear - and his use of the material in debate discomforted both Wharton and Camm[61] as he focused on the Parliamentary processes surrounding the legislation as well as the content of the Bill itself. Wright called for a bipartisan select committee to go to Aurukun, saying,

> ...a few more weeks would not hurt considering that seven years have passed. People want development but they also want to protect the Aborigines.[62]

VIII.

During December 1975, both Bjelke-Petersen and the consortium maintained silence over the affair. In 1976, when as opposition continued and the Federal Government became involved, so did Bjelke-Petersen. In January 1976 a number of consultations were held. Ian Viner, Aboriginal Affairs minister in the newly-elected Fraser Government visited Aurukun and Weipa, and held discussions with mining company representatives in Brisbane. Viner's visit to Aurukun was undertaken without pre-publicity, and on his return the Minister offered the

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[60] *QPD* 269 (4.12.1975) 2545.
[61] *QPD* 269 (4.12.1975) 2551.
[62] *QPD* 269 (4.12.1975) 2553.

curious observation that he considered it not right to express an opinion on the Aurukun people's attitude to mining as they had spoken to him in confidence.[63]

BOEMAR officers and Bjelke-Petersen also met. At a press conference after the meeting Bjelke-Petersen sought to undermine public confidence in the mission management by referring to a Health Department report on sanitation at Aurukun. Presbyterian Moderator, the Rt Rev W.A.Walker accused Bjelke-Petersen of attempting to divert attention from the Church's real grievance over Aurukun. He pointed out that Bjelke-Petersen had only raised the Health Department report at the press conference, and not in the meeting with church representatives. Bjelke-Petersen also referred to the Aurukun people's request for DAIA management of the community.[64]

The Federal Government became further involved through the lobbying of Queensland Aboriginal Liberal Senator Neville Bonner. The Presbyterian Church arranged for one of its ministers who was a NSW Liberal MP, Phillip Ruddock, to question Prime Minister Fraser in the House of Representatives and there were reports that the Federal Government would "intervene". Fraser would consult with Bjelke-Petersen to ensure that Aborigines

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[63] *CM* 24.1.1976.
[64] *CM* 24.1.1976.

were fully consulted and that foreign investment guidelines were met.[65]

During March, support for the Presbyterian Church came from other church organizations, including the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace and the Methodist Church's Federal Citizenship Committee.[66] A deputation of Church leaders led by Archbishop Rush, and including Presbyterian Moderator-General the Rt Rev Pat Wood, Anglican Archbishop Felix Arnott, Queensland Presbyterian Moderator W.A.Walker and Queensland Methodist Conference President Douglas Kirkup, visited the premier, as news reports predicted a clash between the premier and the prime minister over states rights.[67] The other issues on the states rights agenda were equity in the development of the Norwich Park coal mine and the Torres Strait border issue.[68] Fraser had the ability to stop the Aurukun project through Federal export licensing powers.

IX.

Then in a surprise move, the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament announced that the Queensland Ombudsman, David Longland was visiting Aurukun to prepare a report for Parliament on the project. Speaker Houghton indicated the

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[65] *CM* 3.3.1976.
[66] *CM* 15.3.1976.
[67] *CM* 25.3.1976.
[68] *CM* 24.3.1976 and *CM* 25.3.1976.

church leaders' concern and public concern about the project had led to the move. No prior announcement was made of Longland's mission and unnamed Federal officials immediately attacked the move saying that the Queensland Government knew that a number of councillors and elders would be away from Aurukun on a Federal Government arranged visit to Groote Eylant and Gove to examine the impact of mining on Aboriginal communities. Federal minister Viner was quoted as saying, "I'm just wondering why the Queensland Government sent its Ombudsman to Aurukun, surely knowing the councillors and elders would be absent."[68]

It was a shrewd ploy by Bjelke-Petersen. Announced by the Speaker so that Bjelke-Petersen would not be appearing to back down and announced after Longland had left and occurring while some councillors and and elders were absent, it nonetheless provided Bjelke-Petersen with the justification that an independent review of the case had been conducted. Viner's comments, which effectively unmasked the plan, upset Bjelke-Petersen. He called Viner's remarks a slur on the integrity of the Ombudsman, who he pointed out was an officer of the Parliament. "The state Government has no power to send or direct him to do anything," Bjelke-Petersen said.

> Quite properly, I approached the Speaker who then formally asked Mr Longland if he would carry out the

[68] *CM* 26.3.1976.

investigation on behalf of the Queensland Parliament.[70]

Bjelke-Petersen was also reported to be protesting to Fraser over Viner's comments.

Both Bjelke-Petersen and the Presbyterian Church claimed that Longland's report vindicated their position. Longland confirmed that the Aurukun people did not believe there had been adequate consultation, that the Aboriginal people were not implacably opposed to mining, and that if the Aboriginal people were unhappy with the profit sharing agreement then the agreement might need to be renegotiated. Longland reported the Aborigines' view that consultation took place to the point where there was agreement for prospecting, with a promise of further consultation before mining started. The Aborigines, "claimed that this had not happened. . . and that the developers started preparatory mining without permission."[71]

The next day, after Longland's report was published, the Aurukun Associates project manager claimed an increase in the profit share demanded by Aborigines could threaten the viability of the project. Finally, the agreement was not renegotiated, but neither did mining commence. Wharton, however, acknowledged the impact of the Presbyterian Church's lobbying against the Queensland

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[70] *CM* 27.3.1976.
[71] *CM* 7.4.1976.

Government by accusing it of a campaign of "fear, innuendo and half-truths."[72] He was replying to a question from Powell on the publication, "Missionprobe", a ecumenical mission education leaflet distributed to all Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational congregations throughout Australia.

Relations between the two parties - Government and church - were probably beyond repair. In a debate on matters of public interest, Labor MLA Keith Wright called on the Government to appoint an independent person to further investigate the Aurukun people's concerns arguing,

> Criticism will continue to grow and the rift between church and State on this issue must widen unless the Minister or the Premier. . . change their unnecessary rigid, uncompromising stand.[73]

The Aurukun Associates Agreement Act affair contributed substantially to a souring of relations between the Government and the Church, a souring would would reach rancid acrimony by 1978. Bjelke-Petersen's political tactics in denigrating the mission administration and his failure to honour the agreement for full consultation made in June 1973 left a bad taste in the mouths of Presbyterian Church leaders.

But the affair showed the Church's approach to Aboriginal issues in a state of transition, and demonstrated the weakness of its negotiating skills and a further lack of

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[72] *CM* 14.4.1976.
[73] *CM* 18.4.1976.

skills in the areas of governmental relations and media management, even though it had a largely sympathetic press. The affair was also the curtain-raiser for 1978, during which the clash of cultures made national headlines.

CHAPTER 14

TAKEOVER

We should never in any degree whatever deny the role of the church in matters of moral determination... And this inevitably means that if the church is to do its job properly, now and again the church will tread on political toes. I say we should never decry this; on the contrary, we should applaud and encourage any church action that makes people think about politics and social problems.

Charles Porter, 1971.[1]

Any reasonable person would agree what has happened in Aurukun and Mornington Island in the last six months has been caused by a small, fanatical group of white people.

Charles Porter, 1978.[2]

I.

The Uniting Church was not without warning that a takeover could occur. In February 1976, amid the turmoil of the mining wrangle, Wharton and Killoran along with Presbyterian Moderator-General Pat Wood and BOEMAR general secretary John Brown visited Aurukun. The Aurukun people decided that they wished to remain under church management for at least a period of twelve months.[3] In the Department for Aboriginal and Islander Advancement Annual Report presented to Parliament on November 19, 1976 Killoran had criticized the Presbyterian Church as replacing pastoral care with a philosophy of materialism

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[1] Liquor Act Amendment Bill, *QPD* 253 (19.4.1971) 2788.
[2] *CM* 10.8.1978.
[3] Uniting Church, *Minutes* (1977): 94.

and political bias.[4] When Presbyterian Church Aboriginal missions liaison officer Gordon Coutts accused Killoran of political bias and said there were indications of a possible takeover, Wharton denied the claim, saying that if some churches could not maintain material standards, the Government would step in if the church wished. "If they do their bit, we are happy," Wharton was quoted as saying.[5] The Uniting Church, which assumed responsibility for the missions when the Presbyterian Church split at church union in June 1977, set down the conditions for a state government takeover of management responsibilities. The Church said that any division of responsibilities should be "according to the expressed will of the Aurukun people; and that some means should be used to obtain that will." Secondly, that the church's role should be safeguarded and in particular the right of the church to appoint its own staff. Finally, that,

> the rights of those groups desiring to live on and work their tribal lands be recognized, and that some means of ensuring the continuation of those rights after any takeover might be negotiated should be devised.[6]

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[4] "Report of the Director of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement for the Year 1976-1977," *Queensland Parliamentary Papers*, Third Session of the 41st Parliament (1976-7): 1753.
[5] *CM* 21.11.1987.
[6] Uniting Church, *Minutes* (1977): 92-3.

These preconditions were conveyed to Killoran on October 4, 1977 and J.R.Sweet reported to the inaugural synod of the Uniting Church that,

> The Director [Killoran] stated that all these preconditions should be acceptable as the government in previous situations where administration had been returned to them from Church organizations e.g. Edward River, Kowanyama and Lockhart, had allowed matters to continue as they had been.[7]

Killoran must have known that the third point was unacceptable to the Government. He may well have attempted to disguise the government's future intentions with a remark, reported by Sweet, to the effect that the government was not interested in taking over the administration at Aurukun "as the forthcoming election would keep them busy."[8] Of course Killoran's response begged the question, what about after the election?

After the election Wharton was succeeded by Porter. Unlike Wharton - a dairy farmer from Gayndah in the traditional Country Party mould - Porter was a seasoned political professional. Bjelke-Petersen may well have chosen him for the battle ahead. On December 30, 1977 the Uniting Church conveyed its pre-conditions for a takeover to Porter, whose acknowledgement said,

> in all matters affecting the Aurukun community. . . the welfare and interests of community residents is and will continue to be of paramount concern.[8]

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[7] Uniting Church, *Minutes* (1977): 95.
[8] Uniting Church, *Minutes* (1977): 95.
[8] quoted *Life and Times* 29.3.1978.

Then, in a letter delivered on March 13, 1978 Porter advised the church that the state government was taking over the communities on April 1.[10] He issued a press statement critical of the church administration and left Brisbane to tell the communities of his decision, accompanied by Killoran and Mr Les Stewart, chairman of the Queensland Government's Aboriginal and Islander Commission.

Porter did not give the church any explanation for the takeover. However, he told the press that there were two reasons. The first was that the communities were facing "rapidly mounting health, education, maintenance and other problems".[11] He did not allude, at first, to the key difficulties recognized by the Church and the Aurukun community of law enforcement and the abuse of alcohol.

Porter accused the Church of "ineffective management, backward policies and promoting philosophies hostile to Government programs,"[12] The second reason Porter gave for the takeover was that legal advice from the Solicitor-General that,

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[10] It has been suggested that the Queensland Government's decided to act precipitately after Killoran's discovery in late February at the extent of decentralization which had taken place at Aurukun over the preceding seven months. An estimated half of the Aurukun population was then living on outstations. Adrian McGregor, "How Brisbane put the squeeze on Aurukun," *The National Times* (April 3-8, 1978): 12.
[11] *CM* 14.3.1978.
[12] *CM* 14.3.1978.

> legal changes in church circles put in grave doubt the question of the Uniting Church having any legal status in the management of the reserves.[13]

This was a reference to the fact that the original order vesting management authority in the church named the Presbyterian Church. In the litigation accompanying church union the courts had found that the undivided Presbyterian Church continued to exist in both the continuing Presbyterian Church and the Uniting Church.[14] Yet throughout all the legal maneuvering that followed, the Queensland Government did not ever seek to challenge in court the legal right of the Church to manage the communities.[15]

Queensland Uniting Church moderator Rollie Busch immediately responded to Porter's criticism of the Church's management. Busch stated that as long as the communities wished the church to stay, it would. He cited a letter from the Aurukun people dated November 18, 1977 stating their wish to remain under church management.[16] Busch defended the Church's management saying those things criticized by Porter - education and health - were a state responsibility. He declined to comment on whether

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[13] *CM* 14.3.1978.
[14] Harrison, *Baptism* 23 ff.
[15] Porter did pursue the question of the Uniting Church's legal right to manage the communities in correspondence to Busch on April 5. For this and Busch's reply (dated April 6, 1978) see Aurukun and Mornington Island Aboriginal Communities Information Kits (Kit no 6), Box 14, R.A.Busch Papers, Fryer Library, University of Queensland.
[16] *Life & Times* 29.3.1978.

the bauxite reserves were a factor in the takeover, but attributed the takeover to the fundamental disagreement between the church and the Queensland Government on self-determination for Aboriginal people. Indeed, the Queensland Government's anxiety about the church policy would only have been heightened by receipt of the statement of preconditions in October and December 1977. Moreover the church was probably paying the penalty to its opposition to the Aurukun Associates Act.

The Aboriginal communities quickly advised both the church and the Commonwealth government of their desire for direct Commonwealth funding under church administration. Church leaders also met Minister Viner in Canberra. By the week's end both Aboriginal councils were in Canberra for talks with Viner and Fraser. The Commonwealth advised that they would not allow a Queensland Government takeover.[17]

On Monday March 20, eight days after the announced takeover, Busch replied to Porter that the church was not prepared to acquiesce in state government management. The communities having expressed a desire for self management, the church indicated a willingness to be involved in a consultative process with state and federal governments. "We cannot accede to your demand," Busch wrote.[18]

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[17] *CM* 16.3.1978.
[18] *Life & Times* 29.3.1978 p 3

Busch responded to Killoran's criticisms of the church during his visit to Aurukun saying,

> He [Killoran] uses the analogy of the government as Father and the Church as Mother. The Father has apparently been away earning the money but now it is time for him to come home and assume control of the family. So far as we of `Mother Church' are concerned, the `Children' are older than `Father Government' realizes. We are prepared to loosen the apron strings so that our adolescents assume the responsibilities of `setting up' house for themselves.[18]

Later in the second week of the crisis, on Wednesday March 22, intermediaries acting at Busch's request unsuccessfully sought a meeting with the Mr (later Sir) William Knox, who was acting as Premier while Bjelke-Petersen was out of the country visiting Japan.[20] The same day Viner reaffirmed federal government support for self-management:

> It is no longer good enough for officials and governments to decide what is in the best interests of Aboriginals. . . We believe they are ready for self management, they believe it and they are going to get it.[21]

The next day Viner introduced legislation into the national parliament to provide for self management in both communities.

Over the next weekend, as the April 1 takeover deadline approached, church officials including the Rev Ron Smith,

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[18] *Life & Times* 29.3.1978 p6
[20] Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod, Division of World Mission, "Aurukun and Mornington Island Diary of Events," 8 pp typescript. Copy in possession of writer. Hereafter "Diary".
[21] *CM* 23.3.1978.

superintendent of the North Queensland Presbytery and the Rev Gordon Coutts, accompanied by lawyers, moved into Aurukun.[22] The focus was continually on Aurukun rather than the less troubled and more inaccessible Mornington Island. This was perhaps because Aurukun was more widely known after the 1975 legislation, perhaps because its council had previously requested Department for Aboriginal and Islander Advancement management, or perhaps because of the bauxite deposits.

A newspaper report at the time conveyed the atmosphere at Aurukun during the crisis. Headlined, "Aurukun's barefoot Christians," the report continues:

> There is nothing stiff and starchy about the church at Aurukun. . . A huge, old bell peals each morning for a short service in the old church. . . Half the congregation, black and white are barefooted. . . The church's North Queensland Presbytery superintendent (the Rev Ron Smith) takes the risk of a dog fight interrupting his brief sermon. His message is simple. God is on your side. He knows what he is doing. Don't be upset. It will be alright. It finishes with a hymn. Aboriginal Christian voices are beautiful.[23]

II.

Meanwhile in Brisbane, on March 29, 1978, negotiations between Federal and State ministers were held in an attempt to resolve the dispute. Although Federal Ministers Viner and Peter Nixon - a National Party Minister who frequently acted as a trouble-shooter for

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[22] *Australian* 29.3.1978.
[23] *CM* 25.3.1978.

Prime Minister Fraser - also met with Rollie Busch, neither the Aboriginal people, nor the church were part of the negotiations. An agreement was reached for "shared management" of the communities by the Queensland Government and the Uniting Church it was an unlikely compromise given the two parties deep philosophical differences. The agreement was subject to the details of the concept being acceptable to the two communities themselves, the Uniting Church and the Queensland Government, and was to be monitored by the Federal Government.[24] Queensland Liberal Senator Neville Bonner was outraged by the compromise agreement claiming, "I have been treated like a jacky."[25] Rollie Busch was dubious about the agreement and the Aurukun and Mornington Island people did not get the opportunity to voice an opinion.[26]

That night, Bjelke-Petersen publicly claimed the "shared management" was a victory for the Queensland Government and that he had "reprimanded" the two Federal ministers for trying to interfere in Queensland affairs.[27] One of Bjelke-Petersen´s objectives in the negotiations appeared to be to prevent freehold land title being granted to Aboriginal people, as had occurred in the Northern Territory, a situation he frequently referred to as a

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[24] "Diary."
[25] *Australian* 30.3.1978.
[26] *Australian* 30.3.1978.
[27] *CM* 30.3.1978.

form of apartheid.[28] His utilitarian approach to the use of land prevented him from having any perception that the land was of spiritual significance.

Bjelke-Petersen proclaimed himself happy with the 'compromise', clearly indicating how he saw the concept of shared management working in practice:

> It's only the administration of the reserves the government wishes to control - the church would continue with spiritual activities.[28]

However, Bjelke-Petersen's comments antagonized Viner, who in any case was going to have difficulty persuading the Aborigines, the church, and a number of his own backbenchers to accept shared management. With Fraser's support, Viner withdrew from the negotiated agreement with the Queensland and announced the Federal Government's intention to proceed with the legislation already introduced.[30] Viner then visited the communities to outline the purpose and scope of the federal legislation, and promised the communities they would receive self management.[31]

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (Queensland Reserves and Communities Self-Management) Act 1978 was passed by the Federal Parliament on April 7.[32] Porter threatened a High Court challenge to the federal

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[28] *CM* 25.3.1978.
[28] *CM* 30.3.1978.
[30] *Australian* 30.3.1978.
[31] *CM* 31.3.1978.
[32] *CM* and *Australian* 6.4.1978.

legislation, but this was a smoke screen. Overnight, the Queensland Government effectively voided the legislation by abolishing the Aurukun and Mornington Island reserves and declaring the reserves crown land.[33] That weekend, Bjelke-Petersen also stepped up the pressure on the Uniting Church, telling a National Party Central Council meeting in Brisbane that:

> The Uniting Church's real motive in Aurukun is the desire to share in the development of the bauxite deposits...
>
> The church wants a federal takeover which will enable it to claim on behalf of the Aborigines, 30 percent of the gross profit.[34]

Busch's reply in defence of the church was complicated, referring to discussions ten years before in which Tipperary Land Corporation had offered 3% of nett profit from the operation if allowed to mine on Aurukun land.[35] Bjelke-Petersen's assertion that the Uniting Church was motivated by an interest in bauxite royalties drew support for the Uniting Church from the Anglican and Roman Catholic Archbishops. In a style typical of the irenic Francis Rush, the archbishops wrote, "We have no wish to add to the controversy." Nonetheless they wished,

> to assure ...the Uniting Church that we respect their desire to accede to the wishes of their (Aboriginal) people that they remain. We refuse to believe that such a desire is influenced by any possible monetary gain.[36]

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[33] *CM* 8.4.1978.
[34] *SM* 9.4.1978.
[35] *SM* 9.4.1978.
[36] *CM* 11.4.1978.

III.

Bjelke-Petersen's charge against the Uniting Church came on the eve of further negotiations with the Federal Government. Bjelke-Petersen was brought to the negotiating table after pressure from Federal National Party politicians at the Central Council meeting.[37] The agreement reached provided for a form of self-management under special Queensland legislation offering security of land tenure in the form of a fifty-year lease, and administration through elected local government councils.[38] The effect of the proposal was to retain the Queensland Government in ultimate control of the communities, through the Department of Local Government under R.J.Hinze, rather than the Department for Aboriginal and Islander Advancement under Porter.

Thus the negotiations provided the basis for a resolution of the inter-governmental conflict, but were resented by the Uniting Church as a "sellout" by the Federal Government. Busch said the Aurukun and Mornington Island people were "utterly disappointed" with the proposals.[38] John Brown said the agreement, "left much to be desired," declaring:

> The things most important to Queensland Aborigines - land rights, self-management and decentralization of

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[37] *CM* 11.4.1978.
[38] "Joint Statement by the Prime Minister and the Queensland Premier, 11th April, 1978; Questions and Answers with Hon R.I.Viner," Box 14, R.A.Busch Papers.
[38] *CM* 13.4.1978.

> reserves and the involvement in their lives of the Aboriginal and Islander Affairs Department - are, at best blurred and, at worst, completely ignored.[40]

Just over a week later, on April 26, Hinze introduced the Local Government (Aboriginal Lands) Bill into the Queensland Parliament.[41] The Uniting Church found objections to 21 of the 32 clauses of the Bill,[42] and Aboriginal leaders from the two communities told Prime Minister Fraser that they preferred the federal legislation of April 7; that they were unhappy with the "shire council" model and that they wanted freehold title to their traditional lands as well as changes to a number of the administrative details of the scheme.[43]

Fraser insisted that freehold title would not be granted as the Queensland Government would not grant it, and the Federal Government did not wish to use its powers under the constitution to acquire the land. He also insisted that the shire model was workable, and should be given a fair trial, and that he would press the Queensland Government to amend the Local Government (Aboriginal Lands) Bill.[44] This request was partially successful,

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[40] *CM* 13.4.1978.
[41] "Diary."
[42] "Letter from Communities' legal advisor to Mr R.Hinze, Minister for Local Government objecting to sections of the Bill," Information Kit no. 8, Box 14, R.A.Busch Papers.
[43] R.A.Busch, "Statement on the present situation re Aurukun/Mornington Island," 18th July, 1978, Information Kit no. 9, Box 14, R.A.Busch Papers.
[44] R.A.Busch, "Statement..."

although the communities and the church maintained their objections to some six clauses of the Bill.[45]

Beyond this, the federal government had little wish to exert its authority on behalf of the Aboriginal people. While Fraser carried through Whitlam initiated proposals for security of land tenure in the Northern Territory, Fraser was reluctant to have a confrontation with Bjelke-Petersen over states rights. This may have been because of his party's traditional stance on states rights.

Prior to the amendments being introduced, the Aboriginal leaders from the communities sought a private meeting with Bjelke-Petersen. The meeting was arranged, but upon learning that the media were to be present at the meeting, the Aborigines declined to meet Bjelke-Petersen unless their own legal representatives could be present. This was refused and the meeting did not occur.[46]

After the Local Government (Aboriginal Lands) Bill was passed in May 1978, the Department for Aboriginal and Islander Advancement attempted to increase its presence in the communities by moving in its officers. The Aurukun community refused to permit Department for Aboriginal and Islander Advancement officers to remain, and they were forced to return to Cairns.[47] Busch and the communities' lawyer, W.T.McMillian, met with Hinze to

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[45] "Diary."
[46] "Diary."
[47] *CM* 27.5.1978.

expedite the introduction of the new system of local government in the communities.[48] On July 4, 1987 the new shires of Aurukun and Mornington Island were inaugurated. Yet administrative details were still unclear. After a meeting with Aurukun leaders on July 21, church officials met with Hinze to express the concerns of the Aboriginal people.[48]

At this point it is interesting to observe the manner in which the church operated throughout the dispute. Despite its rhetoric about self-management, it is the church, not the Aboriginal people, who are negotiating as intermediaries and advocates on behalf of the Aurukun and Mornington Island people. How prepared was the Uniting Church to allow the Aboriginal people to manage their own way to self-management?

The meeting with Hinze focused on a number of issues: the attitude of Department for Aboriginal and Islander Advancement officers located in the communities; the failure of the Queensland Government to allow the new shires to appoint their own staff; continued funding through the Department for Aboriginal and Islander Advancement rather than through local government grants; and eviction notices by the Department for Aboriginal and Islander Advancement to Uniting Church and Commonwealth staff at Aurukun - whom the Aurukun people wished to

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[48] "Diary."
[48] "Diary."

stay. The Aboriginal people were also concerned that alcohol might be permitted into the community, now that it was a local government area, and that use of the police in dealing with truancy was a covert attempt to close down the outstations.[50]

By early August the Aurukun people telegrammed Fraser and Viner in frustration saying that had tried unsuccessfully to work within the state legislation, and appealed for direct federal support.[51] Bjelke-Petersen decided to visit the communities to "fly the flag for the Queensland Government," accompanied by Porter and Hinze.[52] While the Aurukun Council was willing to meet Bjelke-Petersen's party, the Mornington Island Council refused.[53] At Aurukun, the community's lawyer and a federal official were removed from the meeting between Bjelke-Petersen and the Council by Queensland police on Bjelke-Petersen's instructions.[54] Bjelke-Petersen returned to Brisbane alleging a breakdown in law and order and a "reign of terror" at Aurukun, and promising the appointment of white police to the communities.[55]

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[50] "Diary."
[51] *CM* 8.8.1978 and *Australian* 9.8.1978.
[52] *CM* 8.8.1978.
[53] *CM* 11.8.1978.
[54] *CM* 12.8.1978.
[55] *CM* 12.8.1978.

IV.

Throughout the dispute, almost whenever their wishes were at risk of being thwarted, Porter and Hinze alleged that "fanatical left-wing groups" and "drop-outs, hangers-on and agitators" were attempting to influence the situation for their own ends.[56] Three Uniting Church mission staff, Roger Pettit and Tony Morris, the church's community managers at Mornington Island and Aurukun respectively, and the Rev John Adams, community worker at Aurukun were also attacked.[57] In Parliament, in a style reminiscent of his earlier *ad hominem* attacks on Action For World Development, Porter referred to comments made by the wife of the Aurukun assistant manager that she and her husband were "as much Marxist as Christian."[58]

Porter also made a number of statements critical of the World Council of Churches. Replying to a parliamentary question from Martin Tenni (National Party MLA for Barron River) about the circulation of a petition in northern Queensland in support of land rights, Porter said he had "one source of information that suggests" that funds to fly the petition organizer around north Queensland, were provided by the World Council of Churches, but he

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[56] *CM* 27. 3.1978; 10.8.1978 and 29.8.1978.
[57] Action for World Development, *Injustice Australian style*. A dossier of press clippings, (Fitzroy: Action for World Development, 1979): unidentified newspaper 1.9.1978.
[58] The person referred to but not named by Porter was probably Jeannie Adams, wife of Aurukun Community worker, Rev John Adams. *QPD* 275 (9.8.1978): 1603.

acknowledged to Parliament, "I am unable to check thoroughly on that."[59] He later alleged that a $15,000 grant from the WCC Program to Combat Racism to the North Queensland Lands Council has been spent on "overseas junketing by political radicals."[60]

V.

Yet determined, but passive, Aboriginal resistance to the Bjelke-Petersen Government had began to emerge. Donald Peinkinna, chairman of Aurukun Council announced that Queensland Aborigines would seek support of black African nations to boycott the 1982 Commonwealth Games.[61] Both the Aurukun Council and the Aurukun community were determined not to accept Queensland Government control, and decided to refuse state funding, and not to co-operate under the state legislation. They appealed once again to Fraser to intervene.[62]

Following Bjelke-Petersen's visit, the Queensland Cabinet sacked both councils on August 15, and appointed an Administrator to both shires.[63] The Councils were granted an interim injunction against the Queensland Government's action by Mr Justice Dunn in the Queensland Supreme Court.[64] Two days later, on Friday August 18,

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[59] *CM* 21.4.1978.
[60] *CM* 30.10.1978.
[61] *CM* 24.8.1978.
[62] *CM* 13.8.1978.
[63] *CM* 16.8.1978.
[64] *CM* 17.8.1978.

Mr Justice D.M.Campbell refused to grant a further injunction.[65] On the following Monday four Aurukun councillors met with Fraser and Viner in Canberra unsuccessfully requesting federal intervention yet again. However, three Federal Liberal backbenchers, Senators Bonner and Missen and Mr Peter Falconer (MHR, Casey) moved in the joint parties meeting for the Commonwealth to assume control of the communities' land. The backbenchers, who had visited Aurukun and Mornington Island over the weekend, called the local government scheme of management, "a useful and fraudulent device for enforcing state control."[66] Their move was unsuccessful.

On August 25, 1978 Busch again appealed to Fraser to ensure "the two communities receive self-management and security of access to tribal lands."[67] Fraser replied that his government was committed to the 11th April agreement and would provide further direct funding for the communities.[68] The Aboriginal people persisted. At a meeting in Canberra in November 1978, a delegation of Aurukun and Mornington Island people made a further unsuccessful appeal to Viner for "self management and full land rights."[68] Viner claimed that the appointment of new shire clerks - a process in which the Aurukun and

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[65] *CM* 19.8.1978.
[66] *CM* 23.8.1978.
[67] Action for World Development 1.9.1978.
[68] "Diary."
[68] *CM* 6.11.1978.

Mornington Island people participated - was evidence that progress was being made in the implementation of self management.[70]

In January 1979, the Queensland Government proclaimed the land leases for the two shires, and on March 31, 1979 shire council elections were held throughout Queensland. At Aurukun and Mornington Island, newly elected councils took office replacing the Administrator appointed the previous August. Hinze and the newly appointed federal minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Fred Chaney visited the communities for the inaugural meetings of the new shire councils on April 7 and 8.[71]

The continuing demand by Busch and the Aboriginal people for the exercise of Federal powers was based on Viner's assurances before the April 11 Commonwealth-State agreement that the Aboriginal people would be granted self management through the exercise of Commonwealth powers. Contemporary accounts of the dispute accuse Fraser of pusillanimity in not wishing to confront Bjelke-Petersen over the issue of states rights.[72] Given Fraser's record on land rights in the Northern Territory and his stance on Southern Africa, there was no reason for him not to be sympathetic to the aspirations of the Aurukun and Mornington Island people. Even though

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[70] *CM* 8.11.1978.
[71] (Commonwealth) Department of Aboriginal Affairs, "Background Notes" 3 (August 1979): 5.
[72] *Sydney Morning Herald* 23.8.1978.

he possessed the power to acquire the reserves under S.51 of the Australian Constitution, Fraser was reluctant to enrage, or even engage, an old political ally who had aided his own ascent to power. Having abandoned an earlier `compromise´ on March 29, Fraser was determined to make the April 11 agreement work, in spite of provocation by the Queensland Government. To palliate the pain of having to live under such provocation, Fraser offered more money to the communities, a supremely European gesture. For it was security of land the Aboriginal people wanted, and not more money. The Uniting Church insisted throughout that the wishes of the Aboriginal people were paramount, having finally learned from the lessons of Mapoon and Weipa. This dispute marked the transition in policy from assimilation to self-determination and within the church there was very little dissent from this view.[73] Whether, in spite of Church resolutions in 1976 and 1978 in support of "inalienable title" for "traditional Aboriginal owners,"[74] the church´s lay constituency understood and accepted the spiritual relationship between Aboriginal people and their land is another question. After April 11, 1978 there was little direct role for the Uniting Church, so it continued to act as an advocate and intermediary on behalf of the Aboriginal people.

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[73] *CM* 10.10.1978.
[74] Uniting Church, *Minutes* (1978): 39.

If the aim of the Queensland Government was to pave the way for greater exploitation of the mineral resources around Aurukun then the publicity attracted by the dispute certainly made mining companies wary, although alarums continued to sound over the years about the activities of prospectors in the area around Aurukun. In spite of Fraser's weakness the Aboriginal people of Aurukun and Mornington Island achieved a measure of self-management, and for the rest of Queensland's Aboriginal and Islander people the next stage of their battle for security of land tenure was about to begin.

CHAPTER 15
RED AND YELLOW BLACK AND WHITE; ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN HIS SIGHT

Archbishop Tutu has more Christian principle in his little finger than the Queensland Premier will ever embody.

Queensland Labor Opposition Leader
Neville Warburton. 1987.[1]

Jesus loves the little children;
All the children of the world;
Red and Yellow, Black and White,
All are precious in his sight;
Jesus loves the little children of the world.

Old Sunday School Chorus.

I.

The struggle by Aboriginal people to gain some security of land tenure was actively supported by the bishops, moderators and presidents of the major churches in Queensland, particularly in the years 1976 to 1982. This brought the bishops and councils of these churches into conflict not only with a Queensland Government totally opposed to the notion of `land rights', but also aroused dissent among church members in rural Queensland where traditional evangelical pietism continued to bolster conservative political ideology. However, in the face of national and international opinion leading up to the Brisbane Commonwealth Games in 1982, the Government was forced to offer some security of land tenure in the form

[1] *DS* 14.1.1987.

of Deeds of Grant in Trust. There was never any acknowledgement by the Queensland Government that for Aboriginal people the issue of land rights was religious. The government's particular opposition to Aboriginal land rights was supported by the constituency of traditional pietism who held that such notions were concessions to paganism and bordered on the blasphemous.

The international ecumenical community held a different view and became involved in the plight of Australia's Aboriginal people through their presence at the World Council of Churches (WCC) Commission for World Mission and Evangelism conference in Melbourne in 1980. The Australian Council of Churches subsequently invited an international team of church leaders appointed by the World Council of Churches to visit Australia and report on the conditions of the Aboriginal people. In announcing the visit ACC General Secretary Jean Skuse observed that "they will be looking especially at the Aboriginal situation in Queensland and Western Australia."[2]

The response of the Bjelke-Petersen administration to the visit was marshalled on several fronts. First, Bjelke-Petersen refused a request from the delegation to meet him and gain a first hand understanding of the Queensland Government's policies. Secondly, Bjelke-Petersen arranged for an American based anti-WCC pressure group of a

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[2] *Telegraph* 15.1.1981.

fundamentalist persuasion to send its own team of visitors to investigate the conditions of the Aboriginal people, in an attempt to blunt the credibility of the WCC report. Finally, when the WCC report *Justice For Aboriginal Australians* was released, both the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the permanent head of his department, Mr P.J.Killoran used the forum of Parliament to attack the report.

II.

The WCC delegation consisted of Professor Anwar Barkat of Pakistan, director of the WCC Program to Combat Racism, Miss Pauline Webb, a British Methodist and Director of Religious Broadcasting for the BBC World Service, Miss Elizabeth Adler head of the Evangelical Academy in East Berlin, Mr Bena-Silu of the Kimbamguist Church in Zaire, Dr George Ninian of India and Mr Jim West, an American Indian.[3]

Bjelke-Petersen's initial reaction to a request for an interview was to attack the fact that the delegation included a person from East Germany and one from Africa, ignoring the fact that the people concerned were Christians:

> Our Aboriginals live on clover by comparison to people in countries this mission's personnel represent. Do you want a history of how those countries operate? What about the wall between East

[3] *Life & Times* 13.5.1981.

> and West Germany and the head lopping in some of the third world nations.[4]

Again Bjelke-Petersen's monolithic understanding of the Christian faith and his inability to recognize cultural and theological diversity within Christianity blinded him to the possibility of dialogue with Christians of different views. His comments, along with the refusal to permit government officials to co-operate with the delegation, drew a range of critical comments from clergymen and the media.

The Uniting Church's Rollie Busch accused Bjelke-Petersen of paternalism and an unwillingness to listen to other views, saying the Premier had adopted a "father knows best attitude" and that "dialogue is better than monologue. [But] That's what you have when our Premier is concerned."[5] ACC President Bishop Gabriel Gibran said a meeting between Bjelke-Petersen and the delegation, "would have been an opportunity to explain what the government is doing."[6] The Uniting Church's World Mission director in Queensland, John Hooper echoed Gibran's view that Bjelke-Petersen must have something to hide by his refusal to meet the WCC delegation.[7]

The *Telegraph* newspaper editorialized that Bjelke-Petersen would be perceived internationally as having

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[4] *CM* 5.6.1981.
[5] *Telegraph* 12.6.1981.
[6] *CM* 6.6.1981.
[7] *CM* 6.6.81.

something to hide. "Mr Bjelke-Petersen should not be so suspicious or so sensitive," chided the *Telegraph*.[8] Columnist Quentin Dempster wrote that,

> while the media revel in Mr Bjelke-Petersen's habit of contradicting prevailing domestic and international views by his outspoken personal beliefs, the statements do the state some damage.[9]

Dempster suggested Bjelke-Petersen's views threatened the Commonwealth Games, and that,

> they heighten unnecessary political and social divisions in a society which should be reaching consensus on its problems by intelligent debate
>
> ...consensus might be the ultimate objective of the Liberals, the Labor Party, and the National Party, but the word is not in Mr Bjelke-Petersen's dictionary.[10]

Recognizing the influence of Bjelke-Petersen's religious beliefs on public policy, Dempster observed that,

> Mr Bjelke-Petersen's fundamentalist personal beliefs underscore most of his notable opinions, but they do have a decisive impact on Queensland Government policy.[11]

Dempster noted that Bjelke-Petersen's stance embarrassed his colleagues, and made it appear that there was something to hide, a point refuted by a government spokesman when it was eventually announced that some government officials and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs would meet the delegation, "if necessary." As frequently happened when Bjelke-Petersen was forced to

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[8] *Telegraph* 17.6.1981.
[9] *Telegraph* 18.6.1981.
[10] *Telegraph* 18.6.1981.
[11] *Telegraph* 18.6.1981.

retreat from a position he had publicly espoused, the change of mind was announced by a unnamed spokesman for the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Ken Tompkins.[12]

However, Dempster claimed that the decision that Tompkins would be available to meet the WCC delegation was prompted by discussions between unnamed Liberal and National Party ministers. This action not only isolated Bjelke-Petersen but also protected him, Dempster argued:

> The ministers do not want to come into the open with their countervailing views for fear of embarrassing Mr Bjelke-Petersen. They are prepared therefore to humour him. . . . You can call this backdoor procedure, loyalty or sycophancy. The effect is that Mr Bjelke-Petersen is allowed a freedom of expression within his heavy responsibilities as leader, without any personal accountability.[13]

Dempster concluded that if Malcolm Fraser, then Prime Minister, were to say similar things,

> the knives would be out . . . and it would be doubtful he would last the week regardless of how genuine his personal feelings were on the subject.[14]

Bjelke-Petersen had established such ascendancy over his Cabinet colleagues that they were prepared to put up with his personal opinions becoming public policy even though these potentially damaged the state in the eyes of the world, were contrary to their own religious sensibilities and exposed the government to criticism from the churches.

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[12] *CM* 17.6.1981.
[13] *Telegraph* 18.6.1981.
[14] *Telegraph* 18.6.1981.

III.

However, in the interim, the credibility of the WCC was challenged with the arrival in Australia of the American anti-ecumenist, Dr Carl McIntyre.[15] McIntyre has made a career out of picketing ecumenical events, was present at the 1980 WCC Commission for World Mission and Evangelism conference in Melbourne where the idea of an ecumenical investigation of the conditions of Aboriginal people was promoted. McIntyre was styled by the Brisbane *Courier-Mail* feature as the man who "called Richard Nixon a pinko":

> Dr McIntyre can best be described as an ultra clean cut, clean living, bourgeois, Bible believing American, His dislikes include socialists, communists, liberals, water fluoridation, sex education and socialized medicine.[16]

McIntyre was head of the International Council of Christian Churches, a small fundamentalist pressure group formed in 1948 to oppose the World Council of Churches. The ICCC sets itself up as the response of what it terms, "historic Christianity," to the World Council of Churches. In 1981 it claimed 335 member denominations around the world. The exact number of members is not mentioned.[17] The ICCC's Australian connection was the small Adelaide based Australian Alliance of Bible

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[15] For details of McIntyre's earlier activities in Australia see Harrison, *Baptism* 9.
[16] *CM* 26.6.1981.
[17] *CM* 7.11.1981. (Cf the WCC claim of over 300 member churches and 400 million members) *Life & Times* 22.7.1981.

Believing Christian Churches, led by the Rev John MacKenzie.[18]

Like the proverbial barbed wire fence, Bjelke-Petersen's campaign against the WCC visit had more than one strand. Even after the Queensland Government conceded that Tompkins and his officers would meet the WCC delegation, Bjelke-Petersen kept up his attack on the WCC through his local newspaper column "Speaking Personally" in the *South Burnett Times*. This had the effect of reassuring his constituency that the Premier was not going to be deflected from his position by the widely publicized opposition of church leaders, the nervous embarrassment of his colleagues or the editorialists and commentators in the metropolitan press. First, he-reasserted that Queensland's Aborigines were well looked after:

> There is hardly a nation in the world with a better record in assistance towards Aboriginal people than Australia. And within Australia, Queensland, Queensland and Western Australia and the Northern Territory we are building on this impressive record.[18]

He re-iterated the Queensland Government's policy of assimilation saying,

> We believe the Aboriginal and Islander people want to join the mainstream of Queensland society. Many

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[18] MacKenzie and his organization were subsequently the subject of investigation by the Queensland Police Fraud Squad following distribution of a forged letter purporting to be in the name of prominent anti-racism campaigner and Uniting Church minister, the Rev Dick Wootton. *Life & Times* 25.5.1983 and 31.8.1983.
[18] *SBT* 11.11.1981.

> have already done so. Many more will do so in the future.[20]

After its release, he concluded that the ICCC report "is an endorsement of the policy approach followed by Queensland."[21] He had neither listened nor learned on his visits to Aurukun where Aboriginal people has expressed the desire for self determination.

Attempting to discredit the WCC visitors, he also alleged that a disturbance at Yarrabah Aboriginal community, a former Anglican mission near Cairns, was provoked by the visit of the WCC team and again reiterating his commitment to assimilation:

> The recent violence . . . at Yarrabah. . . will concern every Queenslander interested in an orderly advancement of our Aboriginal and Islander peoples within the mainstream of Queensland society.[22]

ACC General Secretary Jean Skuse responded quickly saying that the Cairns police did not press any charges after the incident and that they did not believe it was occasioned by the WCC visit to Yarrabah. "To suggest this was 'violence' and provoked 'terror' is the product of a malicious imagination," Skuse said.[23] Secondly, Bjelke-Petersen attacked the character and theology of the WCC, comparing it unfavourably with the ICCC.

> The ICCC believes in the Bible from Genesis to Revelations [sic], while the WCC interprets the

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[20] *SBT* 11.11.1981.
[21] *SBT* 11.11.1981.
[22] *Life & Times* 22.7.1981.
[23] *Life & Times* 22.7.1981.

> Biblical message to give a political orientation and literally another gospel. The ICCC believes in historic Christianity and that by regenerating man's spiritual self one can assist in building a new world. It believes the WCC's cult of liberation theology has led it into politics and campaigns which end up with Marxism as its gospel.[24]

He then turned to the communist threat:

> The so-called World Council of Churches visiting team, actually led by an East German, has introduced a frightening new element of violence - a practical result of the WCC's liberation theology.
>
> It is a fact that the Commonwealth government is diligent about keeping out racist and political extremists like the Red Guards, Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Red Brigades, and yet it permits these WCC blow-ins, pretending to be people on God's mission of peace, to enter Australia and leave a trail of distortion, hate and violence behind them.[25]

Bjelke-Petersen continued in a vein well understood by his conservative supporters,

> They ran for cover when confronted with the true bible teachings and the documented evidence of the doubtful political ambitions of the WCC. Indeed. . . the Rev Dr Carl McIntyre followed the team . . . with a challenge to defend their record, but the WCC ducked at every opportunity. They have much to hide.[26]

The phrase "much to hide" is an echo of the criticism of Bjelke-Petersen's refusal to meet the WCC team, and its use here an indication of how much the criticism stung Bjelke-Petersen, who frequently projected the image of

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[24] *Life & Times* 22.7.1981.
[25] Bjelke-Petersen was in error. Anwar Barkat of Pakistan, not Elizabeth Adler was team leader. Moreover Adler did not even visit Queensland. *Life & Times* 22.7.1981.
[26] *Life & Times* 22.7.1981.

never backing away from a fight. Furthermore, the public record does not indicate that at any stage McIntyre offered to engage in public debate with the WCC team. Bjelke-Petersen continued his attack on the WCC, following the ICCC line:

> . . . the WCC theology is simply Marxist class warfare dressed up in some pretty sounding religious words, the later having little meaning or relevance to scripture.[27]

No supporting evidence from either WCC publications or from statements made by the WCC team whilst in Australia, was provided to support this claim, and as Uniting Church moderator Douglas Brandon observed in his report on Uniting Church participation in the WCC, "there is no such thing as a coherent WCC theology."[28]

Bjelke-Petersen concluded his polemic against the WCC by attacking the Program to Combat Racism (PCR), a favourite target of opponents of the World Council of Churches. Bjelke-Petersen supported the ICCC's claim that the PCR was "formulated in Moscow and carried into the WCC by the notorious KGB - and the documentation is quite substantial."[29] Finally, wrote Bjelke-Petersen, "they appear to have hearts which cannot feel the anguish of Christian missionaries butchered in Africa by the WCC's

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[27] *Life & Times* 22.7.1981.
[28] Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod, "Report of Moderators's Committee on the Relationship of the Uniting Church with the World Council of Churches," (1982): 10. (Hereafter Brandon, *Report.*)
[29] *Life & Times* 22.7.1981.

well financed proteges," a reference to the Program To Combat Racism's Special Fund which provided humanitarian aid to black opponents of the white government of Rhodesia.[30] The substantiveness of that documentation was never to be assessed by the readers of the *South Burnett Times*; its nature and origin were not supplied to the readers by Bjelke-Petersen or by its editor.[31] In the South Burnett, the work of the WCC was communicated through the filters of Joh Bjelke-Petersen and Carl McIntyre.

Thus Bjelke-Petersen fortified his own political and religious constituencies against the possibility that the churches locally or at a state level could undermine his policies of assimilation of Aboriginal people and his opposition to land rights. However, in his affirmation of the ICCC, Bjelke-Petersen did not make public that despite its claim to believe in "historic Christianity" that the McIntyre's church, the Bible Presbyterian Church was a breakaway group from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church itself came from a schism in American Presbyterianism when the Calvinist fundamentalist J.Gresham Machen left Princeton Seminary in 1936.[32] McIntyre also excludes from acceptance such conservative evangelical organizations as the Billy

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[30] *Life & Times* 22.7.1981.
[31] The relationship between the *South Burnett Times* and the League of Rights is detailed in Chapter 11.
[32] James Barr, *Fundamentalism* (London: SCM, 1977): 187.

Graham Evangelistic Association, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, World Vision, Intervarsity Fellowship and the Wycliffe Bible Translators.[33]

IV.

The WCC report, *Justice For Aboriginal Australians*, was published in August 1981. It contained recommendations very little different from previous resolutions of the churches on Aboriginal issues. It contained no *ad hominem* criticism of Bjelke-Petersen or Western Australian Premier Charles Court, who had also criticized the visit. The report's impact was greater than the collective wisdom of Australian church councils, courts and conferences, first because of its international character, but secondly because of the publicity generated by Bjelke-Petersen and Court in refusing to meet the delegation. *Time* magazine for example reported the findings under the headline, "Down and Out Down Under" and quoted Bjelke-Petersen's "Aborigines are living on clover" line.[34]

To the churches and the Aboriginal people, the report's primary note was one of encouragement to do more to bring dignity and opportunity to Aboriginal people. But it urged governments to bring in land rights legislation, recommending that the Commonwealth Government use its

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[33] *Life & Times* 8.7.1981.
[34] *Time* 24.8.1981.

constitutional powers to "override racist state legislation". The report recommended that the Queensland Government state publicly "and at least six weeks prior to taking action so as to enable sufficient public debate" its intentions for Aboriginal and Islander people when the 1971 Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Acts were repealed.[35] This was a perceptive acknowledgement of the Queensland Government's penchant for a `midnight sausage machine' approach to legislation. One of the most significant recommendations for all parties was that Aboriginal participation in the political process be encouraged.[36] Finally the report urged the Australian people to acknowledge prior ownership of the land by Aboriginal people.[37]

The only section of the report to contain any theological analysis is the opening few pages, "Racism - A Betrayal of the Christian Gospel". Three theological affirmations are made about racism:

> To tolerate racial discrimination is to deny the perfection of God's creation. It is to say that God made a lot of mistakes, some superior, some inferior. To practice racial discrimination therefore is to deny the efficacy of the salvation wrought in Jesus Christ. It is to say that nothing has changed - that we are still not reconciled. . .
>
> ...To practice racial discrimination is to break the unity of the body of Christ, to fracture the Church. To force uniformity on a diversity of cultures. . . and force them to become part of and like the Anglo-

[35] *Justice For Aboriginal Australians* (Sydney: ACC, 1981) 64.
[36] *Justice* 61.
[37] *Justice* 70.

> Saxon Church in this country is to fracture the body of Christ, a witness to the Kingdom of God.[38]

Implicit in these affirmations is a theological objection not only to the Queensland Government's policy of assimilation but also to the as yet unpublished report of the ICCC.

V.

In reply to the WCC report, Bjelke-Petersen used the forum of Parliament, an institution which he found did have its uses. In the spring session of the Legislative Assembly, two 'Dorothy Dixes' were tossed from the National Party backbenches to Aboriginal Affairs Minister K.B.Tompkins, who promptly issued the questions and his replies as media releases, which meant that any defamatory material was covered by parliamentary privilege. The first question by the Member for Balonne, Don Neal enabled Tompkins enabled to attack Aboriginal activist Shorty O'Neill as a "criminal and poseur," and to suggest obliquely that O'Neill's activities were funded by the WCC Program to Combat Racism.[39]

The second question came from Hinchinbrook MLA, Ted Row, about the presentation of an Aboriginal flag to the Townsville City Council. Tompkins used the opportunity to assail Aboriginal activist Gary Foley who had been

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[38] *Justice* 9-10.
[39] Ministerial Media Release 16.9.1981.

appointed the previous year as honorary chairman of an Australian Council of Churches Aboriginal advisory committee.[40] Foley had facilitated meetings between Aboriginal community groups and the WCC team, and his assistance had been praised in the WCC report.

In October, nine days before the arrival of the ICCC team, Tompkins released a twenty page ministerial paper in the Queensland Legislative Assembly as the Queensland Government's response to *Justice for Aboriginal Australians* entitled, "An Assessment of the World Council of Churches 1981 Report Concerning Queensland Indigenous Affairs and Race Relations." It is a measure of the pressure placed on the Queensland Government by the WCC visit that such a response was necessary. Copies were mailed to clergy throughout Queensland. The assessment deals specifically with each of the areas addressed by the WCC report. While there is no evidence in the ministerial paper suggesting this was the case, it is probable that the Queensland Government's desire to discredit the WCC on one hand, and to refute its report's conclusions on the other, arise from the fact that the Brisbane Commonwealth Games were then a year away, and in the years preceding the Games the land rights lobby in Queensland, including the churches, had used that event

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[40] Ministerial Media Release 16.9.1981.

as an opportunity to lobby for security of land tenure for Aborigines.[41]

While Bjelke-Petersen himself responded to the WCC with an almost knee-jerk anti-communism, elements within in the Government were also aware of the international embarrassment that could be caused by a boycott of the Games by Black African nations, an action which would place Queensland on a par with South Africa.

Tompkins commenced his statement to the Queensland Legislative Assembly with the observation that he was,

> increasingly concerned at the trend in Aboriginal affairs today. . . towards militancy and confrontation. . . to the neglect of work which would assist people.[42]

While directed towards opponents of government policy, the remark could equally be directed towards his own government leader and the ICCC.

Tompkins continued, "Australia has experienced two shocks this year which clearly indicate extremist politics are developing. . ."[43] The Minister then referred to statements by Charles Perkins as the first shock; the second shock the Minister said was the visit of the WCC

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[41] Political Chronicle, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 28.1 (April 1982): 98.
[42] Ministerial Paper by the Hon K.B.Tompkins, "An Assessment of the World Council of Churches 1981 Report Concerning Queensland Indigenous Affairs and Race Relations." Queensland Legislative Assembly (20th October, 1981) 1.
[43] Ministerial Paper 1.

team. "Shock" is not the noun the Minister would be expected to use. "Disruption", from his perspective, may have been a more appropriate term. But, given that he used the word "shock", and intentionally so, then then his statement gives an indication of the extent to which the WCC visit had an impact on the Queensland government. Clearly from Dempster's reportage there were some members of the government who were uncomfortable with Bjelke-Petersen's handling of the visit. Tompkins' ministerial statement attempted to scuttle the credibility of the WCC. He said, "the merging of religious belief with political action is not a wise path as is shown with the recent assassination of President Anwar Sadat. . ."[44]

The ACC's assessment of Tompkins's Ministerial paper was that it was

> . . . a substantial and well researched document. . . [and] basically accepts many of the recommendations and indicates the Queensland Government recognizes the deplorable situation.[45]

Indeed, Tompkins half conceded the point with his comment that the WCC's observations,

> may have been appropriate in 1961. In 1981, when many years of neglect are being rapidly and effectively rectified, they are inflammatory, divisive and unnecessary.[46]

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[44] Ministerial Paper 2.
[45] *Justice for Aboriginal Australians. . . continuing the journey* (Sydney: ACC, February 1982) 28-29.
[46] Ministerial Paper 19.

The ACC's major criticism of Tompkins' paper was that it, " . . . justifies an assimilationist policy rather than support by the churches for self management, self reliance and land rights,"[47] a philosophical difference, it will be recalled that was at the core of the conflict over Aurukun and Mornington Island.

VI.

The Uniting Church was less sanguine about the ministerial paper. Queensland Synod Moderator Douglas Brandon requested Rollie Busch to write a response for circulation among ministers.[48] The Church was apparently surprised by the boldness of the government's move in circulating its paper to all clergy. The net effect was that the Queensland Government's view was most likely to be read, as the WCC had not been similarly circulated.

Busch formed the opinion that the paper was Killoran's work.[48] Killoran would have a deep antipathy towards the ecumenical movement following the Aurukun and Mornington Island conflict. Such antipathy would partly explain why he was also critical of the Uniting Church newspaper *Life and Times* for its "hard sell stance".[50]

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[47] *Justice for Aboriginal Australians. . . continuing the journey* 29

[48] Brandon to all Ministers. 17.11.1981. Photocopy in possession of writer.

[49] R.A.Busch, "Ministerial Paper - Hon K.B.Tompkins M.L.A." (11.11.1981) 1.

[50] Ministerial Paper 20.

Moreover, as Director of Aboriginal Affairs since 1963, it was Killoran's policies as much as those of his political masters that were under indictment from the WCC. This is probably why, in the words of Rollie Busch, "The venomous criticism evidences the fact that the (WCC) Report has touched a raw nerve."[51] Confusion about the WCC, its role and functions, Busch wrote, is a sign that the Minister and his department were unable,

> to come to terms with Church organizations that do not fit neatly into the establishment, as has been the case with Queensland Churches over the past decades. Nor do they understand that this 'militancy' in the sense of a recovery of a Biblical radicalism is as much a feature of Roman Catholicism and conservative Evangelical groups as of the Uniting Church.[52]

He accused the Queensland Government of attempting to pit the churches against each other by promoting the ICCC cause, in order to divert attention from government policies. "Why else the visit of the ICCC . . . whose findings . . . have met with the resounding silence they deserved," Busch asked.[53]

Within a year Tompkins' ministerial career came to a less than illustrious end when he unwillingly resigned after a number of misadventures, which included a Torres Strait fishing trip billed as a fact-finding tour. But as political commentator Margaret Cribb observed, Bjelke-Petersen did not sack Tompkins. He was forced to resign

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[51] Busch, "Ministerial Paper" 3.
[52] Busch, "Ministerial Paper"3.
[53] Busch, Ministerial Paper 3.

under pressure from the organizational wing of the party on the grounds of age and poor performance. Immediately after the fishing trip, the Premier and Cabinet privately reprimanded Tompkins and another colleague, National Party Deputy Leader Vic Sullivan, for their behaviour, but, wrote Cribb, "The Premier's obdurate loyalty to old friends and colleagues is well known. . . so that no resignations were forthcoming at this time."[54] In the crusade against the communist-influenced ecumenists, Tompkins had served Bjelke-Petersen well.

VII.

The ICCC team visited in October-November 1981, after the release of the WCC report. Their visit and subsequent report raise the question as to whether the ICCC's primary interest was in attacking the WCC, rather than the condition of Aborigines. The first of the ICCC's own terms of reference was, "to check out carefully the report and findings of the World Council of Churches international team."[55] The second was, "To ascertain the most effective means of giving to the Aborigines the Gospel of Jesus Christ."[56] The subsequent items relate to government-Aboriginal relations, education, health and

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[54] Political Chronicle, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 29.1 (1983): 110.
[55] Australasian Alliance of Bible Believing Christian Churches, *A communist operation in Australia. Report of the International Council of Christian Churches Special Commission to investigate the Aborigines October 29-November 5, 1981.* 5. (Hereafter ICCC, *Report*)
[56] ICCC, *Report* 5.

employment. Prior to this time there is no record of the International Council of Christian Churches or its Australian affiliate expressing interest in the evangelization of the Aboriginal people. On the other hand, two of the member churches of the World Council of Churches, the Anglican Church and the Uniting Church had been involved in missionary work among Queensland Aborigines since 1866 and 1891 respectively. The Lutheran Church commenced missionary work among Aborigines in Queensland in 1886.[57]

There were five persons associated with the ICCC visit. MacKenzie, along with three American clergymen Dr Earle White, the Rev Frank Mood and the Rev Darryl Hagler. The fifth member of the group was a Kenyan, the Rev Solomon Muthukya. Muthukya's name does not appear in the final report. He was described as an ordained minister of the Independent Presbyterian Church and the General Secretary of the East African Christian Alliance.[58] Muthukya's visit to Brisbane was promoted by Mrs Rona Joyner, who wrote of him, "His firm opposition to the World Council of Churches is testimony enough to the principles of truth on which he stands."[59] White and Hagler came from Pennsylvania, Mood from New Jersey. Mood and Hagler's credentials, as presented in the ICCC report, show them

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[57] Harrison, "Missions" 2-4.
[58] R.Joyner, "Supplement to `STOP PRESS' " 10.7, (Oct 1981): 1.
[58] Joyner 1.

as having significant media skills. White was a missionary administrator.

In both Brisbane and Townsville, the ICCC group received support from the Presbyterian Church, a denomination which had withdrawn from the WCC at the point of church union in 1977. Muthukya's Brisbane meeting was held in the Ann St Presbyterian Church. In Townsville, White, Hagler, MacKenzie and Muthukya held a meeting in the John Knox Presbyterian Church, and were publicly supported by that church's minister, the Rev Hugh Gallagher. In Townsville, they also encountered some opposition. A public meeting in the Townsville Presbyterian Church on November 3, 1981, was attended by a number of Aborigines who were members of mainline churches. One report of the meeting claimed that,

> When Aborigines in the audience attempted to question Rev MacKenzie during question time, the chairman refused to allow questions on land rights, the WCC report or on any other Aboriginal issue.[60]

The Townsville Aborigines then invited the ICCC delegates to meet with them, an invitation that was not accepted. The meeting the ICCC group was invited to attend strongly supported the findings of *Justice for Aboriginal Australians*.[61]

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[60] Peter Hanley, "Letter to The Editor," Townsville *Daily Bulletin* 7.11.1981, and news reports 5.11.1981 and 4.11.1981.
[61] Townsville *Daily Bulletin* 5.11.1981.

Adverse press comments by local Aborigines, supported by Letters to the Editor from white supporters, forced Gallagher to defend himself and the ICCC:

> To bring Aboriginal land rights into a properly, publicly-called meeting to discuss the theological aberrations of the WCC and their communist leadership and support of terrorist groups, is to 'gatecrash'.
>
> The delegation would not have had the temerity to enter into debate on a delicate matter of racial relations in a country in which they had been travelling for only a matter of weeks.[62]

Having thus undermined the credibility of the ICCC delegation and exposed its real purpose as an anti-WCC propaganda exercise, Gallagher then turned his attention to the Aborigines present at the meeting saying that an audio recording of the meeting had been made, but, "the tape will not convey the inebriation of some of those present, nor the smoking in God's house. . ."[63] Such remarks reveal the shallow legalism to which evangelical pietism had been reduced. The debate was about genocide, and Gallagher was worried about drinking and smoking!

White and Hagler also responded asserting they had never been invited to a meeting with local Aborigines.[64] While Bjelke-Petersen may have been able to score propaganda points against the WCC through his mastery of the media, on the ground, the ICCC and its supporters

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[62] Townsville *Daily Bulletin* 7.11.1981.
[63] Townsville *Daily Bulletin* 7.11.1981.
[64] Townsville *Daily Bulletin* 7.11.1981.

found it difficult to maintain their credibility when challenged.

The ICCC report was publicly presented by MacKenzie at a press conference organized and attended by Bjelke-Petersen in the Executive Building in George Street, Brisbane in November 1981. Bjelke-Petersen endorsed the report and MacKenzie was reported to have said that the ICCC delegation found that ninety to ninety-five percent of Queensland Aborigines had alcohol problems, but found no evidence of racism.[65] "If you preach them the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, these problems will fall away," MacKenzie said. "As a Christian, of course, I would say the basic problem is sin," MacKenzie added.[66]

Bjelke-Petersen said,

> I appreciate the fact that these people came out. . . and are interested in preaching the Gospel. The most effective way of trying to help them is through the church.[67]

Presumably "them" means the Aboriginal people.

Both the report and its presentation have the air of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera about them. McIntyre, MacKenzie and Bjelke-Petersen appear to be parodying a significant world organization engaged in a serious exercise. Whereas MacKenzie said "the delegation's priority on the tour was to counter WCC attempts to

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[65] *CM* 7.11.1981.
[66] *CM* 7.11.1981.
[67] *CM* 7.11.1981.

ferment revolution in Australia."[68], the WCC delegation reported,

> As we visited numerous Aboriginal communities. . . we observed not only many children with nose and ear infections, numerous people with eye disease or even blindness and many suffering from malnutrition, but also saw the environmental conditions which cause them.[68]

McIntyre prefaced the ICCC report, entitled "A Communist Operation in Australia", with these words:

> The tragedy of the World Council of Churches findings concerning the Aborigines is that it shows no concern and makes no provision for the giving of Christianity to these people. For a church council to argue for their native and pagan deities, and to leave them in their spiritual darkness, amounts to a betrayal of Jesus Christ.[70]

Clearly here is the conflict of two worldviews, both of them claiming their origins in historic, orthodox Protestant Christianity.

VIII.

Even if in opposing the WCC Bjelke-Petersen was speaking from personal conviction, his political instincts were still sound. He understood, probably instinctively, that Church leaders, the media, and sensitive Cabinet ministers not withstanding, there were within the denominations affiliated with the WCC, members for whom the credibility of the WCC was suspect.

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[68] *CM* 7.11.1981.
[68] *Justice* 34.
[70] ICCC, *Report* 5.

Charles Porter's continual criticism of the WCC and especially the Program to Combat Racism had an effect, and in consequence there was some disquiet in the pews about the World Council of Churches, particularly in the pews of those denominations who were members of the WCC: the Anglican and Uniting Churches.

In the Uniting Church, Douglas Brandon (Moderator for 1981-82) set up a committee of inquiry into the work of the WCC with the ungainly title of "The Moderator's Committee on the Relationship of the Uniting Church with the World Council of Churches." The committee's findings were never in doubt as UCA participation in the WCC was written into the Uniting Church's foundation document, *The Basis of Union*[71] and the real power to determine Uniting Church participation in the WCC rested with the national Assembly of the Uniting Church. Indeed the synod resolution establishing the committee reaffirmed the church's desire to continue WCC membership.[72]

However, an investigation would have a cathartic effect with pastoral benefits. It would allow WCC critics within the Uniting Church, who were encouraged to seek membership on the committee along with committed ecumenists, to present any evidence they might have of

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[71] Uniting Church in Australia, *Constitution & regulations and the basis of union* (Melbourne: Uniting Church Press, 1986) 7.
[72] Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod, *Minutes and Supplementary Reports of the Fifth Synod* (1981): 120.

communist influence in the WCC. Through participation, it would also hopefully lock the critics into supporting the final recommendations. The investigation was sparked off by a letter to the 1981 Synod from Oakey Parish on the Darling Downs, part of the conservative religious and political heartland of Queensland.

One year later, Brandon reported:

> We were unable to find verifiable evidence of the oft repeated claim that there are communists in the WCC. In many cases no names were given. Allegations regarding certain members of the Russian Orthodox Church could not be substantiated from any independent source.[73]

The report blamed the South African government's disinformation campaign against the WCC for the distorted views held by Uniting Church members.[74] It found that many WCC programmes such as those on refugee resettlement, faith and order, theological education, and renewal and congregational life were little known. Using 1981 as a base, the report calculated that $0.037 of every dollar given in parishes went to the WCC. Although suggesting that greater communication between member churches and the WCC should occur, the report reaffirmed Uniting Church involvement in the WCC and subsequently, very little criticism of the WCC was heard in the Uniting Church.

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[73] Brandon, *Report* 14.
[74] Brandon, *Report* 7-8.

In summary, the visit of the World Council of Churches had several outcomes. First, it did add further pressure to the Queensland Government on the broader issue of the treatment of Aboriginals in Queensland and the specific issue of land rights. That pressure was acknowledged by Tompkins' ministerial paper. Secondly, it precipitated a challenge to participation in the World Council of Churches on the part of church members who either accepted the accusations of Bjelke-Petersen and the ICCC that the WCC was communist influenced. That challenge was ultimately to benefit the WCC.

Thirdly, Bjelke-Petersen showed himself a masterful opponent in linking up with McIntyre and inviting the ICCC to counterbalance the WCC. It again revealed Bjelke-Petersen's deficient ecclesiology, and the extent to which he was willing to use religion for political purposes. It also showed him as a confirmed anti-communist. However, if his unilateral anti-ecumenism caused his colleagues some heartburn, they chose not to challenge him publicly, thus re-enforcing his ability to operate at whim. The consistent pattern of not challenging the Premier was ultimately to the detriment of good government in Queensland. Finally, the ICCC showed themselves to be opportunistic ideologues with little concern for the real needs of Aboriginal people. It is an open question as to whether they used the Premier to a greater degree than he used them.

However, the polarization Bjelke-Petersen was able to effect in the community on Aboriginal issues in the early 1980s would not have been possible in the second half of the decade. This was not because of any changes in Bjelke-Petersen's approach but because the churches, in particular the Uniting and Anglican churches, substantially altered they way they related to Aboriginal people. In a process that began in 1982, the Uniting Church transferred the power and responsibility for Aboriginal affairs to the Aboriginal people themselves. The move came at the request of the Aboriginal people and originated in Arnhemland where a religious revival had occurred on former mission settlements.[75] Although the risk was that such a move would be perceived as an abdication of responsibility by the white church on the one hand, and the creation of a separatist movement on the other, the handover occurred with considerable goodwill on the part of the white church, and was received with great joy by Aboriginal Christians.

The establishment of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress put pressure on the Anglican church to recognize the need for Aboriginal leadership within that church. The result was the appointment of two assistant bishops of Aboriginal and Islander origin.

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[75] Harrison, *Baptism* 76-79.

The Catholic Church has been slower to indigenize its episcopate, but its Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Council, along with the astute legal work of Jesuit barrister Frank Brennan have resulted in a more fully informed church. No longer could the churches be accused that they, "sponsor the activities of a small group of radical opportunists and ignore the elected leaders of the indigenous communities."[76]

IX.

Bjelke-Petersen's fear of the churches as a stalking horse for socialism was constant. When the Anglican Archbishop of Capetown, Desmond Tutu visited Australia in January 1987 to speak at a Uniting Church youth conference his presence was attacked by the Victorian President of the Returned Services League who described Tutu as a "witchdoctor in bishop's clothing."[77] Bjelke-Petersen chose to enter the controversy by sending Ruxton a telegram of support, and as the media storm broke around him, stepped up his attack on the Nobel Peace Prize winning prelate calling Archbishop Tutu, "un-Christian".

Bjelke-Petersen argued that Tutu supported the African National Congress, saying, "they put tyres around people's necks, pour petrol over them and burn them -

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[76] Ministerial Paper 20.
[77] *DS* 14.1.1987.

that's not a Christian concept."[78] Before flying out of the country on a trip to Turkey the Queensland Premier alleged that Tutu had made statements supporting the murder and slaughter of hundreds of thousands of people. "That's not the way a Christian gentleman operates," Bjelke-Petersen said.[79]

The remarks of Ruxton and Bjelke-Petersen embarrassed the Federal Government. Speaking at a reception for Tutu at Kirribilli House, Prime Minister Hawke tried to down play the criticism of Tutu saying,

> . . . the world will pay very little attention to the Ruxtons and the Joh Bjelke-Petersens of this world because they don't speak for Australia. To speak of Archbishop Tutu as one who advocates violence is a total repudiation of the clear statements he has consistently made. Obviously I was disappointed with the comments of Mr Ruxton, and I think the Archbishop gave the appropriate response that he try and love him out of his attitude.[80]

If Hawke was disappointed, Queensland church leaders were annoyed. Anglican Bishop George Browning, acting in the absence of Archbishop Grindrod, and the Uniting Church's Queensland synod secretary Duncan Harrison issued a joint statement saying, "We deplore and reject comments attributed to the Premier. . . accusing Archbishop Desmond Tutu of being unchristian." The churchmen termed "thoroughly regrettable" Bjelke-Petersen's support of the "vindictive and unnecessary comments" of Ruxton. Tutu,

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[78] *CM* 13.1.1987.
[78] *CM* 13.1.1987.
[80] *CM* 14.1.87 and *Australian* 14.1.1987.

they said, "is a leader of an oppressed people and as such it is his Christian responsibility to provide them with a voice."[81]

This defence of Tutu was widely published in the Queensland provincial press, and received negligible negative reaction from the pews. Bjelke-Petersen did not make any further response as he had flown to Turkey. Tutu was not visiting Queensland, so why did Bjelke-Petersen enter the controversy in support of Ruxton? Was it part of his now constitutional antipathy towards Anglican prelates? Was it part of his opposition to anyone who supported the rights of indigenous people? The answer is that Bjelke-Petersen perceived Tutu to be part of the international communist conspiracy which aimed to subvert capitalism and democracy throughout the world. Both Ruxton and Bjelke-Petersen linked Tutu with the ANC, an organization allegedly under communist influence. Tutu's reply to that was:

> The African National Congress is in fact a coalition of very many points of view; there are some Marxists among them as there are others. The President of the ANC, Mr Oliver Tambo is a Christian. He is an Anglican and offered himself for ordination. If it wasn't for the fact that the ANC was a banned organization, Tambo probably would now be a priest. The last time he and I met in London we began our time together by sharing the eucharist. I am less concerned about possible future communist regimes than I am about the real injustices and suffering happening under a so-called Christian government.[82]

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[81] Press release by Anglican & Uniting Churches 13.1.1987.
[82] *Journey* (Feb 1987): 6.

But for Bjelke-Petersen, his rigidly doctrinaire anti-communism took precedence over the issue of racial injustice whatever its cause. Unlike Ruxton, whose prime motivation was racist, Bjelke-Petersen's concern was primarily one of anti-communism. While in Australia, Tutu had stated his hope for a non-violent solution to South Africa's problems, but at the same time had recognized the possibility of violence in the struggle to overthrow apartheid. He told a gathering of journalists from the religious press in Adelaide:

> The church never condones violence. All violence is evil, but the time may come when a choice has to be made between two evils, and at times it may become unnecessary to overthrow an unjust regime. That's a very traditional viewpoint - the 'just war' position.[83]

The complexities of this ethical position were lost on Bjelke-Petersen. The struggle of the German Lutherans with the doctrine of resistance under National Socialism was not part of Bjelke-Petersen's religious formation. His frequently stated belief was that Aboriginal land rights was a communist-inspired subversive plot, and that the World Council of Churches was one of the main fronts used by communism to promote the land rights cause. He regarded the WCC as under communist influence.[84] It was a view Bjelke-Petersen continued to espouse even after the heat had gone out of the land rights issue in Queensland with the Queensland Government's decision to

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[83] *Journey* (Feb 1987): 6.
[84] *CM* 30.5.1984.

give Aboriginal people some security of land tenure through Deeds of Grant in Trust. Like his opposition to Tutu, Bjelke-Petersen's opposition to land rights was based on his fear that freehold Aboriginal land could be used as bases for communist subversion. On the surface it is perhaps surprising that Bjelke-Petersen did not have greater empathy with Aboriginal people. The Cherbourg Aboriginal Settlement, the major congregation of Aboriginal people in southern Queensland, was located in his Barambah electorate, and he had extensive contact with the people there over the years. His work as Chairman of the Hopevale Lutheran Mission Board from 1952 to 1962 and on Pizzey's ministerial committee has been mentioned in Chapter 10.

Bjelke-Petersen has been described by Charles Porter as "not given overmuch to self-questioning"[85] and so perhaps his own relationship with the land blinded him to Aboriginal notions of spirituality. An assimilationist, he encouraged the adoption of a European notions of the land among Aborigines, telling Parliament in a Supply debate on the Sub-Department for Native Affairs in 1950:

> I wish to commend the government on their policy of the establishment of settlements or missions. It proves that they realize the importance of establishing such missions on suitable areas of land, that is, land that can be used profitably.[86]

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[85] Charles Porter, *The 'gut feeling'* (Brisbane: Boolarong, 1981) 51.
[86] *QPD* 202 (22 November, 1950): 1566.

The spirituality of both Bjelke-Petersen and the Aboriginal people was shaped by the land. But the difference is an ontological one. Aboriginal people were part of the land; from it they drew their life, their spirituality, their ultimate meaning. Bjelke-Petersen and the rural pietists of Queensland stood over against the land, and drew their life, their spirituality, their ultimate meaning from its exploitation.

This view of life and the land, while progressively under challenge during the Bjelke-Petersen years, was also reinforced during the nineteen eighties by a combination of fundamentalist and neo-pentecostal influences within the religious culture of Queensland. Section 4 discusses the emergence of these neo-pietist influences along with the continuing religious resistance to the policies of the Bjelke-Petersen regime in the areas of human relationships, industrial relations and electoral reform. The focus then returns to Bjelke-Petersen and the sense of mission he brought to the premiership, to populism and messianism in Bjelke-Petersen's political career, and to the expression of these within a form of civil religion: a faith in the Sunshine State.

PART IV.

ON A MISSION FROM GOD?

CHAPTER 16.

THE BEGINNING OF LIFE

Government members would do well to listen to the educationalists within the department rather than to...Rona Joyner, who has been so successful in the past in fixing Cabinets. Usually carpenters do that, but sometimes joiners do it.

Ann Warner MLA,
speaking on the Education Estimates
in the Queensland Parliament in 1983.[1]

I.

Bjelke-Petersen's association with McIntyre and the Australasian Alliance of Bible Believing Christian Churches was but one sign of the growing influence of a more militant, and separatist, fundamentalism on Bjelke-Petersen and the policies of the Queensland Government. As suggested in Section 2, Bjelke-Petersen lay in a theological and ecclesiological tradition of evangelical pietism, rather than fundamentalism. Nonetheless, that does not preclude his being influenced by fundamentalist pressure groups and adopting policies sought by such groups.

In the late nineteen seventies, the influence of this more militant and separatist fundamentalism was manifest in three major controversies over educational issues: the

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[1] *QPD* 292 (16 December 1983): 857.

banning of the MACOS and SEMP curriculum materials,[2] the introduction of creationism into the high school biology syllabus, and the drawn out public debate over human relationships/sex education courses in schools. The story of the MACOS and SEMP controversy has been told widely and well.[3] For both sides of the debate, the importance of MACOS and SEMP was symbolic rather than intrinsic. Scott even records that in the convoluted logic of bureaucracies, Queensland Education Department officials were prepared to sacrifice MACOS and SEMP to achieve the more important goal of school-based assessment.[4] While the other two controversies - those

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[2] MACOS (*Man: A Course of Study*) was a year long social studies curriculum produced in the United States by the National Science Foundation and designed to relate the social sciences to biological science. It drew heavily on work of educationalist Jerome Bruner. Using the discovery learning method, the content of the material covered the life cycles of salmon, herring gulls, baboons and the Netsilik Eskimos.
SEMP, the Social Education Materials Project was sponsored by the Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra, a national clearinghouse for the development of curriculum materials established in 1974. SEMP included materials on consumerism, the family, government, race and ethnic relations, social conflict and control and urbanism.

[3] Colin Power, "The banning of MACOS in Queensland: a case study of politics and the curriculum," *Pivot* 6.3 (1979): 62-3; Ann Gowers and Roger Scott, *Fundamentals and fundamentalists: a case study of education and policy-making in Queensland*, Australian Political Studies Association Monograph no 22, (ASPA: Bedford Park, Adelaide, 1979); Ann Scott, "The banning of SEMP in Queensland," in Roger Scott ed., *Interest groups and public policy: case studies from the Australian states* (Melbourne: Macmillan 1980): 116-151; Alan Williamson, "Pressure group theory and the politics of educational decision-making in two Australian states," *Political Science* (Wellington NZ) 33 (December 1981) 140-150.

[4] Roger Scott, "Interest groups and the Australian political process," in Scott 228.

over creationism and human relationships - were more protracted, with less clearly definable outcomes, their long term potential impact on Queensland education was far greater.

II.

The first signs of a political campaign on educational issues came in a speech to the League of Rights-affiliated Conservative Club by the Rev D.C.Sheldon, minister of the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Brisbane in 1974.[5] Sheldon had been alerted to the presence of MACOS in Queensland schools by the fact that a child of one of his parishioners was attending a school trialling the program.[6]

The Presbyterian Reformed Church is a small fundamentalist denomination formed in 1967 when the minister, elder and majority of members of the Sutherland congregation in NSW withdrew from the Presbyterian Church of Australia in protest against perceived modernist theological influences, especially the teaching of Professor Lloyd Geering of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.[7] The denomination's Brisbane Congregation was formed in 1968. The formation of such a congregation is evidence of strengthening influence of separatist fundamentalism in the religious culture of Queensland.

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[5] Ann Scott "Banning of SEMP" 124.
[6] Ann Scott "Banning of SEMP" 124.
[7] Ward and Humphries 65.

The Queensland Cabinet's decision to ban the MACOS and SEMP curriculum materials followed a lobbying campaign by the educational pressure groups, the Society to Outlaw Pornography (STOP) and the Campaign Against Regressive Education (CARE), aided by the Community Standards Organization.[8] Founded in 1972, STOP and CARE had a membership estimated to be less than 2000 people.[9] Executive Director of the group was Rona Joyner.

The groups' earliest campaigns had sought to the removal from schools of a number of texts - particular those in English literature - which Joyner considered contained salacious material, and in 1977 the textbook *Messageways* was withdrawn from schools. Among other works Joyner considered unsuitable for the classroom were books by Graham Green and Evelyn Waugh as well as Ernest Hemmingway, John Steinbeck, James Mitchener, Donald Horne, Thomas Keneally and William Golding.[10]

In January 1978 the Queensland Cabinet banned MACOS from Queensland Schools, and the following month it banned SEMP. In March 1978, the Catholic Education Office of the Brisbane Archdiocese instructed its schools not to use

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[8] The key figure in the Community Standards Organization was its secretary George Cook, who was also the public face of Catholics United for the Faith. See Chapter 5. The CSO was founded in 1963 as The Queensland League for National Welfare and Decency, adopting the name Community Standards Organization in 1973. Gowers and Scott 46-7.

[9] Gowers and Scott 104.

[10] Gowers and Scott 7.

MACOS.[11] The banning of MACOS was a direct result of the Australian visit of the self-styled Texan "textbook watcher" Norma Gabler.[12] Gabler was a fundamentalist who had been involved in a campaign against MACOS in the United States. For STOP and CARE, the banning of SEMP was almost a windfall gain. However, Joyner did not rest. She announced that the Study of Society syllabus and sex education were her next targets.[13]

In her fight to have MACOS banned Rona Joyner campaigned through letter-writing to politicians and newspapers and the use of talk-back radio. She also travelled extensively throughout Queensland addressing some sixty meetings.[14] However, she regarded her most effective tactic as being to circulate Cabinet members with her ideas. Her access to Bjelke-Petersen through the ear of Florence Bjelke-Petersen was the subject of widespread comment at the time.[15]

Yet Joyner's determination to have the Study of Society course and sex education courses banned were thwarted by decision of the Queensland Government on April 4, 1978 to establish a Parliamentary Select Committee on Education in the wake of protests from the education community over

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[11] *CM* 8.3.1978.
[12] Ann Scott "Banning of SEMP" 124-5.
[13] Study of Society was an integrated social sciences subject.
[14] Ann Scott "Banning of SEMP" 145.
[15] Ann Scott "Banning of SEMP" 145 and Adrian McGregor, "Flo's kitchen Cabinet," *National Times* 24-30 September, 1978: 7.

the banning of MACOS and SEMP. The Select Committee's terms of reference encompassed a review of the "adequacy and efficiency" of secondary education; the balance in primary education between basic skills and other activities; the adequacy of technical and further education; the adequacy of primary and secondary social education courses and the need for new courses; and a review of decision-making processes in education, community involvement and mechanisms for investigation of parental complaints.[116]

There were five member of the Select Committee: two National Party MLAs, M.J.Ahern and L.W.Powell; two Liberal MLAs: C.J.Miller and W.D.Hewitt; and one Labor MLA, E.F.Shaw, the ALP spokesperson on education. Ahern was a Roman Catholic; Powell, a teacher before his election to Parliament, had remained a Presbyterian following church union in 1977; Miller was a Uniting Church lay person.[117] The Select Committee travelled widely throughout Queensland and drew over 3000 submissions.[118] In its report, which encompassed the issues of educational aims, organisation and management of the Queensland education system; the future of social education; literacy and numeracy; human relationships education; the needs of isolated children and isolated

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[116] D.J.Anders, "Select committee on education in Queensland," *Pivot* 6.3 (1979): 64.
[117] John Harrison, "Taking an independent line," *Journey*, September 1986: 6.
[118] Ann Scott "Banning of SEMP" 135.

schools and post-secondary education, the Select Committee recommended that parts of the SEMP materials approved by a Queensland Education Department assessment of the materials be permitted for use, but MACOS remained banned.[19]

III.

The fears of Rona Joyner and her supporters - fears apparently shared by the Queensland Cabinet - were that the subversion of the Judaeo-Christian foundations of the society by 'secular humanism' was to be achieved by suborning the young through the educational process. Membership of STOP and CARE was not permitted by persons "having sympathetic leanings towards anti-scriptural philosophies or subversive activities."[20]

The Constitution of STOP and CARE defined what it termed, "the scriptural view of education" as:

> rote learning, testing competitively; history; geography; Christian standards; discipline; respect for elders and those in authority; humility; meekness, seeking the knowledge of good rather than evil; etc, and at all times using the Bible as the standard for literature and textbooks used.[21]

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[19] Queensland. Legislative Assembly, "Second interim report of the select committee on education in Queensland," [The aims of our schools and the future of social education] (Brisbane: Government Printer, 1980) 19-20.
[20] Gowers and Scott 32.
[21] Gowers and Scott 32.

This view of education has been described as "essentialist".[22] Joyner claims that traditional educational methods are derived from the Bible.

Joyner's view of the relationship of Christianity to the state is particularly interesting. Erroneously assuming Christianity to have the status of an established religion in Australia, Joyner wrote:

> The authorities should remember that this is a Christian-constituted country, which recognizes Christianity in Parliament and the Law Courts; and it is therefore the birthright of every Australian child to receive an education based on the precepts of Scripture...[23]

Similarly while writing on human relationships, Joyner argued:

> The ultimate in human relationships is to be eternally reconciled with God through Jesus Christ...All else in education is subordinate to this ...objective, for when the States agreed to unite indissolubly as the COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA, on the understanding that they would with equal continuity,"HUMBLY RELY ON THE BLESSING OF ALMIGHTY GOD," the commitment to do so was made in public admission of the fact that we "do not live by bread alone".[24]

Before the Select Committee, Powell asked Joyner if the the best way to avoid denigration of religion in schools

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[22] Power 62.

[23] Rona Joyner, "Excerpts from 'Today's educational crisis,' in Michael Macklin, Caral Mohle and Helen Yeates, eds., *Intentions: essays on the social foundations of education* (Brisbane: Norton Bailey, 1978): 42.

[24] Rona Joyner, "Questioning innovations in education," in Macklin 164.

was to remove religion in any form from the school.

Joyner responded:

> We cannot do that legally because of the referendum that was held back at the turn of the century. It outlawed secular humanistic-type religion.[25]

Joyner's view of the relationship between Christianity and the state in Australia, carrying within it the seeds of an argument that Australians (or only Queenslanders?) are a chosen people living in a land especially blessed by Divine Providence, certainly put her at odds with the cultural relativism acknowledged to be a pre-supposition of MACOS.[26]

Yet Joyner was a person of loose denominational affiliation, having been attached at various times to Anglican, Lutheran, Seventh Day Adventist[27] and Presbyterian congregations. In evidence before the Select Committee she denied being a fundamentalist:

> Mr Miller: You are said to be a fundamentalist and say that our school policies should be bound by Biblical truths. Is this the case?
>
> Mrs Joyner: ...I believe in all sorts of interpretations in the Bible being applied in different instances and so I certainly don't believe

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[25] Gowers and Scott 105. Joyner is apparently referring here to the 1908 Bible in State Schools referendum in Queensland.

[26] John R.Cole, "Scopes and beyond: Antievolutionism and American culture," in Laurie R.Godfrey, ed., *Scientists confront Creationism* (New York: W.W.Norton, 1983) 27.

[27] Adrian McGregor, "Another crusader sets out to save Queensland," *The National Times*, 6-11 March, 1978: 18.

> in the literal interpretation of the Bible from cover to cover. So I am not a fundamentalist, obviously. But I do believe that the Bible should be the guide-line for our education system.[28]

It is difficult to accept Joyner's denial of fundamentalism. One of her critics has asserted that Joyner "totally accepts the creation myth."[29] Moreover, the anti-MACOS campaign in the United States was but part of a long-running and wide-spread anti-evolution campaign within the United States, with evolution being representative of all the modernism so opposed by classical fundamentalists.[30] Indeed, Joyner ultimately exhibited the separatism characteristic of fundamentalism, eventually withdrawing from both mainstream politics and mainstream education. After the National Party refused to renew her membership in 1986, - events described in Chapter 18 - Joyner stood in the Lansborough by-election in 1990 under the flag of Fred Nile's Call To Australia Party. By the time the debate over creationism in state schools was taking place Joyner was running a "tutorial service" at Redcliffe, using the Accelerated Christian Education curriculum materials. These materials, first introduced into Australia in 1977 were fundamentalist, and more specifically creationist.

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[28] Gowers and Scott 109.

[29] J.Freeland, "STOP! CARE to COME and PROBE the right-wing PIE," *Radical Education Dossier* 8: 4.

[30] Cole 25-29.

They claim to be based on, "the highest level of scriptural principles, biblical concepts and separation philosophy."[31] Users of the ACE materials are proscribed from any relationship with churches who are members of the US National Council of Churches or the World Council of Churches.

While a National Party member, Joyner was a strong personal supporter of Bjelke-Petersen and his policies,[32] and given the fact that she lacked strong links with any denomination or congregation, fundamentalist or otherwise, it is conceivable that Joyner's primary interests were political, and that religion fulfilled the function of providing the ideology for her politics. Yet integrated into a church or not, fundamentalist or not, Joyner's views resonated with the dominant ethos of the religious culture of Queensland, and her campaigns were supported by Protestant and Catholic alike.[33] As Roger Scott observed:

> ...the success of Mrs Joyner of Queensland was due in part to the fact that she and her supporters articulated concerns about the education process which were widely enough shared among the supporters of the ruling political party for the leader of that

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[31] John Harrison, "Would you buy an education from these people?" *Life & Times* 13.6.1984.

[32] See Chapter 12.

[33] Ann Scott "Banning of SEMP" 136-7 describes the similarities between the Catholic Parents Association submission to the Select Committee and the STOP/CARE submission.

> party to take action along the lines she was advocating.[34]

From the perspective of this study one might also add, that not only were Joyner's ideas shared by the supporters of the ruling political party, but they were broadly acceptable within the religious culture of Queensland at large. Such a conclusion runs contrary to the common view that Joyner was representative of a very small minority.

Scholarly interpretations of the MACOS and SEMP issue contain a curious reversal. The political scientists have characterized the conflict as raising issues of accountability in education[35] whereas educationalists have attempted to relate the banning of SEMP and MACOS to the political culture of Queensland. Invariably, the work of educationalists on this subject presents the opponents of MACOS and SEMP in an undefined or illdefined way as 'fundamentalist'. Williamson for example writes that "STOP/CARE clearly based their campaign on an ideology of Christian fundamentalism," without any clear definition of the term.[36] Richard Smith's commentary on "Fundamentalism: the movement for non-neutrality in education," - written before the banning of MACOS and

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[34] Scott 232.

[35] "Comments on *Fundamentals and fundamentalists*," *Politics* 14.2 (November 1979): 289-290.

[36] Williamson 147.

SEMP - quotes Sheldon who is a fundamentalist, and Joyner who claims not to be, to substantiate his argument.[37] While Smith uses the adjective 'conservative' in conjunction with fundamentalism,[38] he offers a definition of fundamentalism drawn from a bachelor's degree dissertation of a colleague, Knight [39] A definition from Barr or Dollar or *The Oxford Dictionary of The Christian Church* would have been more appropriate.[40] Smith then adds that, "the premises of fundamentalism encompass other areas of social life including politics, education and economics."[41] The manner in which fundamentalist premises impinge on politics and education is self evident; their impact on economics remains unstated.

In subsequent work Smith, with Knight, probes more searchingly into fundamentalism and the political culture, and draw on previous analyses of the political culture of Queensland to posit that,

> fundamentalism, as a paradigm for social living, integrates popular democratic values in a rurally-based conservative cultural tradition, and to this

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[37] Richard Smith, "Fundamentalism: the movement for non-neutrality in education," in Macklin 51-2.

[38] Smith 51, 52.

[39] Smith 52.

[40] James Barr *Fundamentalism* (London: SCM, 1977) and G.W.Dollar, *A history of fundamentalism in America* (Greenville SC: Bob Jones UP, 1973).

[41] Smith 53.

> extent is the dominant matrix of meaning (but not the only one) in Queensland.[42]

Such a view contains some truth. While Parker has found little evidence of a specifically fundamentalist tradition within Australian Christianity, there is a long tradition of evangelical pietism within the religious culture of Queensland. Indeed, it is argued here that only at this point in Queensland's history - the nineteen seventies - does classical American fundamentalism begin to have any influence in Queensland, so little or no historical influence can be accounted to fundamentalism. However, Smith and Knight then infer a similarity between Australia and the United States, inaccurately refer to fundamentalism's "genesis in rural America".[43] The historians of fundamentalism have recorded that the movement's genesis lay in the industrial North-East of the United States.[44]

IV.

The impact of classical fundamentalism on the religious culture of Queensland was increased with the establishment of the Creation Science Foundation (CSF) in 1980. This organization had its roots in a seminar on creationism conducted by two secondary school science

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[42] Smith and Knight 9.

[43] Smith and Knight 9.

[44] Sandeen 26 and Marsden 194.

teachers Ken Ham and John Mackay in Brisbane in 1977. After the seminar Ham and Mackay began importing and selling a large volume of creationist material from the United States. In 1979 Ham resigned from the Queensland Education Department to promote creationism full time and in 1980 Mackay, a biology teacher at Brisbane Grammar School followed.[45] The CSF had seven members: another high school science teacher, David Denner; two medical practitioners John Osgood and John Rendle-Short (then Professor of Child Health at Queensland University); an accountant, John Andrew Thallon and a solicitor, Robert Stephen Gustafson.[46] Only one, Rendle-Short, was a practising scientist, and none had qualifications in biblical studies or theology. In addition to the seven members named above, the CSF had an advisory board. Of the 19 members of the advisory board in 1984, twelve were school teachers; three were medical doctors.[47]

The Foundation was modelled on the Institute for Creation Research in California, a body established in 1963 and attached to the Christian Heritage College in San Diego.

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[45] *Creation Science Prayer News*, January 1985.

[46] Martin Bridgstock, "What is the creation Science Foundation Ltd?" in Martin Bridgstock and Ken Smith, *Creationism. An Australian perspective* (Melbourne: Australian Skeptics, 1986) 69.

[47] John Harrison, "Creation Scientists: Origins of that Species," *Life & Times* 13.6.1984.

The CSF Articles of Association require members to believe:

> The Bible is the written Word of God. It is inspired and inerrant throughout and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. Its assertions are historically and scientifically true in all the original autographs.[48]

Members were also required to give assent to a number of propositions such as, "The great flood of Genesis was an actual historic event, world wide in its extent and effect."[49]

The CSF described themselves as advocates of 'scientific' creationism. In the wake of the 1968 US Supreme Court decision that laws banning the teaching of evolution as unconstitutional, creationists posited their view as an equally valid scientific theory. Ironically, in order to mount this argument, Creationist authors have desacralized much of their material, with all references to the deity removed.[50] Scientific creationism was the key which unlocked the door of access to the science curriculum in Australia, and in the United States where religious teaching is not permitted in the classrooms of the state. Yet this aspiration to be scientifically

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[48] Bridgstock 68.

[49] Bridgstock 68.

[50] Michael Ruse, *Darwinism defended: a guide to the evolution controversies* (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1982) 293.

rigorous has its limits. As the present writer observed in 1984:

> ...respect for scholarship and concern for academic credibility only extends to the physical sciences. There is no interest in, and respect for the great volume of academically credible scholarship by men and women of deep biblical faith in the areas of biblical studies, literary criticism and theology. Indeed any meagre reference to this vast heritage of scholarship has usually been one of dismissive contempt in spite of a substantial contribution by evangelical scholars.[51]

Creationists in Queensland followed the strategy of the American counterparts and in 1981, the Queensland Department of Education issued an instruction that creationist theories of the origins of the earth and humanity were to be taught in state secondary schools alongside evolutionary theories. Lin Powell, who assumed the Education portfolio in December 1982, told the Queensland Parliament in May 1984 that the 1981 instruction "caused no contraversy (sic) among science teachers."[52]

Powell's 1984 reiteration of Education Department policy on creationism brought a muted response from the churches. Fr Ron McKeirnan of the Catholic Education Office advised principals of Catholic schools that:

> Catholic Scripture scholars, faithful to the guidance of the Biblical Commission concerning interpretation of the sacred writings, are generally in agreement that these passages in Genesis are of

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[51] Harrison "Creation Scientists..." 9.

[52] *QPD* 294 (10 May 1984) 2550.

> religious significance, and are not scientific explanations of the world's beginnings.
>
> ...the fundamentalist position of creationism is not taught as an acceptable approach to understanding God's word... [53]

The Uniting Church appointed a taskgroup of four theologians and a scientist to study the issue. The group reported that it,

> ...rejects the the religious views of the movement called "Creation Science" as sub-Christian, because:
> they falsely imply that one must choose between the scientific theory of evolution and belief in God as Creator.
> ...they misuse the Bible by promoting it as a scientific textbook.
> ... they attempt to replace faith in God as Creator with "proofs" based on questionable "scientific" theories of the earth's origins.[54]

The statement was not adopted as an official church policy for fear that its unequivocal language might create division, and so the reported was merely "commended" by the Moderator of the day, the Rev A.R.Kidd for "consideration" by Uniting Church members.[55]

The Presbyterian Church publicly supported Powell in a Letter To The Editor of the *Courier-Mail*. Its annual Assembly in May 1984 approved a document from the denomination's theological faculty, "endorsing a strongly

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[53] *Catholic Leader* (1.7.1984): 6.

[54] *Life & Times* 27.6.1984.

[55] *Life & Times* 27.6.1984.

creationist position,"[56] further evidence of fundamentalist trends within the post-union Presbyterian Church. The Wesleyan Methodist Church, a small denomination in the holiness tradition but with a fundamentalist stance on the Bible,[57] also supported Powell.[58]

Powell replied to McKeirnan arguing that the teaching of creationism was an acknowledgement of pluralism:

> All we have done is to state quite clearly that we want a balance. It is impossible for a parent who wants to bring up a child along a particular line, if a schoolteacher is blatantly contradicting what the parent teaches.[59]

It was left to the Labor MLA Ann Warner to point out the irony of introducing creationism into the curriculum in the name of pluralism. Warner told the Legislative Assembly:

> ...the Minister is introducing fundamentalism into our schools under the guise of pluralism...He is introducing creationism and at the same time, is banning materials developed by humane societies who look at social development and life as they really are...[60]

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[56] *CM* 1.6.1984.

[57] Ward & Humphries 128-129. In Queensland particularly, the Wesleyan Methodist Church drew members from Methodists not willing to join the Uniting Church.

[58] *Creation Science Prayer News*, January 1985.

[59] *CM* 30.5.1984.

[60] *QPD* 300 (17 October 1985) 2127 (Education Estimates Debate.)

Having achieved their primary objective, the CSF set about conducting in-service courses for science teachers on how to present creationism. However, they were soon beset by allegations of financial malfeasance. The Australian Sceptics published a polemic critical of creationism and the CSF co-authored by Dr Martin Bridgstock, a lecturer at Griffith University and Dr Ken Smith, a Baptist layperson and mathematics lecturer at Queensland University. Bridgstock examined the balance sheets of the CSF and discovered a $92,358 loss on investments by the CSF in 1984.[61] CSF vice-chairman Gustafson explained that the loss arose from the failure of a Christian investment company into which the funds had been deposited.[62]

The Queensland Police Fraud Squad confirmed they were investigating the loss.[63] Bridgstock also demonstrated that the financial support for the movement was increasing. Total income for the year ending 31st March 1984 was $539,542, and of that $135,646 was in donations, an amount that had risen from $33,052.52 in 1981.[64]

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[61] Bridgstock 70-71.

[62] Philip Chubb, "A large lump of mammon lost in God's vineyard," *Age* 4.1.1986.

[63] *DS* 7.1.1986.

[64] Bridgstock 70.

Yet neither the allegations about the movement's finances, nor the departure of Ham to join the creationist chautauqua in the United States, and the departure of Mackay to form a separate Creation Research Centre in February 1987[65], inhibited the spread of creationism. The departure of Bjelke-Petersen from the premiership at the end of 1987 saw Powell replaced as Education Minister by Brian Littleproud, a Catholic representing the Condamine electorate based around Chinchilla on the Darling Downs. Like Powell, Littleproud was a former teacher. One of Littleproud's first announcements was that the teaching of creationism would continue in Queensland schools.[66] Such a result was to be expected, for within the political and religious culture the retirement of one politician - even though it was Joh Bjelke-Petersen - changed little.

For the creationists had not simply re-inforced the existing values of the religious culture; they were in many ways 'fundamentalizing' the religious culture of Queensland to a greater degree than it has ever been before. In their country lecture programs the Creationists had several targets: clergy; teachers, particularly science teachers; and Christian lay people, especially parents, all in congregations where the embers

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[65] Barry Price, *The Creation Science controversy* (Sydney: Millennium, 1990) 197.

[66] Price 4.

of old evangelical pietism still smolder, or where the flames of neo-pietism burned bright. But more particularly the creationists targeted a particularly vulnerable part of the population: adolescents. This is why the introduction of creationism into the school curriculum is of far greater significance than the banning of assorted curriculum materials. Cabinets and their members come and go, but patterns established within the religious culture can last for generations.

V.

The basic contention of the fundamentalists opposing MACOS and evolutionary theory was that these were manifestations of secular humanism. In this opposition they followed the arguments and strategies of fundamentalist groups in the United States. However, community debate about the broad issue of human relationships, and the more specific issue of human relationships programs in schools, attracted adverse comment and opposition from both Bjelke-Petersen and the fundamentalists. The Royal Commission on Human Relationships was established by the Whitlam Government in 1974, with Justice Elizabeth Evatt, Ann Devison and Felix Arnott, Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane (1970-1980) as commissioners.[67] The Royal Commission's Final Report

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[67] Felix Arnott (1911-1988) was born in England, educated at Keble College, Oxford and Cuddesdon College, and ordained in the Diocese of Wakefield. He came to Australia after ordination in 1939 as Warden of St John's

was released in November 1977. In Queensland, the report's release co-incided with the growing crescendo over MACOS. It also came at a time when the Queensland Government was under attack from those who would later form the Concerned Christians.

The Royal Commission's five volume report made recommendations on a wide range of issues: education for human relationships; health and medical education; sexuality and fertility (including contraception and abortion); the family (including child care, divorce, adoption, child abuse); equality and discrimination (including difficulties faced by women, Aboriginal people migrants, homosexuals and the handicapped) and finally rape and other sexual offences.[68] The report's recommendations drew support from both the Australian Council of Churches and the Anglican Bishops' Conference but strong criticism from organizations such as the Right To Life and individuals such as the Rev Fred Nile.[69] Nile made the observation that the Report "reflects the Commissioners' humanist values not facts," and that it

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College, University of Queensland. From 1946-63 he was Warden of St Paul's College, University of Sydney. Appointed an assistant bishop in the Diocese of Melbourne in 1963, he was elected to Brisbane in 1970, from where he retired in 1980. Jim Warner, "A scholar - with a feeling for ecumenism," *Catholic Leader* 14.8.1988.

[68] Royal Commission on Human Relationships, *Final Report* Vol 1. (Canberra: AGPS, 1977) 30-95.

[69] *Life & Times* 24.4.1978

ensured, "a further lurch by Australia in the direction of permissive secular humanism."[70]

Archbishop Arnott then drew the wrath of Bjelke-Petersen in his charge to the 1978 Synod of the Anglican Archdiocese of Brisbane. In a wide-ranging address the Archbishop made general reference to liberty and dissent in a democratic society. He expressed concern about the Aurukun-Mornington Island dispute as "a symptom of our anxiety" and defended the right of Christians to oppose decisions of government "equally supported by our continual prayers for all who hold authority over us." He also observed that it would be a "tragic waste" if the SEMP materials were not used in the classroom, recognizing that there were "small details that any sensible teacher would choose to ignore."[71] It was not a radical address, and also took care to address the issue of liberty, or the lack thereof, in Communist countries. However, it provoked perhaps the most vitriolic attack Bjelke-Petersen ever made on the churches and their leadership during his premiership.

According to Bjelke-Petersen, Arnott had "lost his credibility following his involvement with the Royal Commission." Bjelke-Petersen then focused on the issue of pluralism:

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[70] *Life & Times* 24.4.1978

[71] *Life & Times* 21.6.1978.

> The Archbishop had not disassociated (sic) himself from the Commission's report which among other things, advocated abortion, legalizing of homosexuality, incest and easier divorce. Archbishop Arnott's claim that these anti-Christian issues had to be recognized because Australia was now a pluralist society was hollow...
>
> The church was also closely associated in causes being promoted by the Communist Party, atheists and humanists.[72]

Moreover, the Anglican Church's "continuing refusal to ordain women...contrasted strangely with Archbishop Arnott's statements on rights for aborigines and other minorities."[73]

Bjelke-Petersen also took the opportunity to criticize the Uniting Church saying,

> Many Christians were deeply disturbed at trends in the Uniting Church in Queensland...[T]hey were concerned at the way the church was being manipulated into supporting left-wing causes. Dwindling congregations showed that the church was losing what moral influence it had left.[74]

The Uniting Church moderator, R.A.Busch declined to comment on Bjelke-Petersen's remarks.[75] However, the Anglican Synod, still in session, was less sanguine. In an urgency debate the synod supported its archbishop's

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[72] News Release (Premier's Department, Brisbane) 13.6.1978.

[73] News Release. That his own Lutheran Church was not even giving consideration to the ordination of women cut no ice with Bjelke-Petersen.

[74] News Release.

[75] *Life & Times* 21.6.1978.

charges on civil liberties, saying it regretted the tone of Bjelke-Petersen's comments and inaccuracies in his remarks. The archbishop was given a standing ovation. The *Courier-Mail* reported:

> Two hundred and fifty Brisbane Anglican churchmen cheered when their synod last night carried a motion condemning the Queensland Premier (Mr Bjelke-Petersen) for attacks on Archbishop Felix Arnott and Queensland churches.[76]

Introducing the published text of a series of ABC broadcasts based around the report, Arnott wrote in his own defence. He deplored the counterpointing of the terms 'Christian' and 'humanist', listed a long line of Christian humanists, and declared himself "proud to be a humanist in this sense."[77]

VI.

The Royal Commission of which Arnott was a member had drawn attention to the fact that all states except Queensland conducted human relationships courses in schools.[78] The question of human relationships courses in schools was then addressed by the Queensland

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[76] *CM* 14.6.1978.

[77] *Human Relationships: a Christian view* (Sydney: ABC, 1980) 9.

[78] *Final Report* Vol 1: 33. See Greg Logan, *Sex education in Queensland: a history of the debate* (Brisbane: Information and Publications Branch, Queensland Department of Education, 1980) 38-50 for more background on the debate during the nineteen seventies. Logan's account was published before the Select Committee Report was released.

Parliamentary Select Committee on Education. It recommended "instruction in human relationships should be integrated into the normal school curriculum."[79] Powell, however, disagreed with this recommendation and his objections were appended to the report. Powell argued for the establishment of a committee to undertake further work on the issue. This committee should include "the widest possible representation of community interests with special emphasis being placed on ministers of religion," a suggestion which offers insight into Powell's perception of what constituted wide community representation.[80]

In 1981 the then Minister for Education W.A.M.Gunn established an Advisory Committee on Human Relationships to report on whether human relationships courses should be introduced into schools and if so, what years and what topics such courses should cover. The eleven person committee comprised of no less than seven denominational or para-church representatives. It was chaired by the Church of Christ director of Christian Education, and sometime National Party candidate for the seat of Murrumba, the Rev Allan Male. The Roman Catholic,

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[79] Queensland. Legislative Assembly, "Fourth Interim Report of the Select Committee on Education in Queensland," [Human Relationships] (Brisbane: Government Printer, 1980) 4.

[80] Queensland. Legislative Assembly, "Final report of the select committee on education in Queensland," (Brisbane: Government Printer, 1980) 43.

Anglican and Uniting Churches were each represented; the Uniting Church by a minister with close National Party connections, the Rev Dr L.A.Born. The Baptist and Lutheran Churches, the Churches of Christ and the Salvation Army were represented by a Baptist minister and academic, the Rev Dr A.J.Munday. The Assemblies of God, Presbyterian Church, Seventh Day Adventist Church and the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints were represented by Assemblies of God Pastor H.W.Bartholomew. The Youth Council of Queensland was represented by Dr R.J.Rawson of the conservative evangelical organization Scripture Union of Queensland. The Country Women's Association and the Parents and Citizens Associations were represented, as were primary school principals and the Queensland Health Department.[81] The inescapable conclusion is that the committee was selected with a view to producing an outcome compatible with the views of the Government.

When the Report was presented in September 1982, it contained a majority report which recommended human relationships courses within and outside school hours, and a minority report presented by Bartholomew which recommended courses outside school hours only.

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[81] Queensland, *Report of advisory committee on human relationships* (Brisbane: Minister for Education, 1983): viii. (Hereafter ACHR).

Nine months later the Queensland Cabinet opted for courses conducted outside school hours and agreed to publish both majority and minority reports after they had been comprehensively leaked to the media.[82] Neither the Youth Council of Queensland representative nor the CWA representative fully supported the majority report. Rawson advised Gunn that he was not in favour of the sexual relationships section of the course being taught in school hours, but "due to the considerable pressure that comes from being the 'odd man out' in Australia and in most of the western world," he saw an opportunity to,

> base the program on a sound moral footing...in the hope that the Judaeo-Christian ethical base would give it an anchor that may weather the storms of deteriorating standards in our society.[83]

In his minority report Bartholomew argued that "the goal of many in-school sex education programs are demonstrably anti the traditional Judaeo-Christian ethic," and that

> the real goal ...of sex education in State Schools is the sexual revolution...the conversion of Western Society from the traditional viewpoint where sex is inextricably linked to love, marriage and family to the 'neo-puritanical' where sex is trivial, for fun, devoid of Biblical morals, and subject to moral autonomy.[84]

Bartholomew also listed the organizations which supported his minority report. They included the Association of

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[82] ACHR iii.

[83] ACHR 52.

[84] ACHR 25.

Catholic Parents, Catholics United for the Faith, Festival of Light and Community Standards Organization, Women Who Want To be Women, Committee (sic) Against Regressive Education, Society to Outlaw Pornography, the Coalition for Better Schooling and the Committee on Moral Education.[85] The support of these groups Bartholomew argued showed "a substantial portion of the community stands firmly against the introduction of Sex Education Courses in State Schools."[86] Bartholomew's report was also distinguished by the similarities it bore to Powell's Appendix to the Select Committee Report. In particular, the work of Dr Louise F.W.Eickhoff was quoted extensively in both.[87] So what was essentially a minority report of the Select Committee was accepted as the basis for establishing an advisory committee, whose majority subsequently agreed with the original Select Committee recommendation; but whose minority report was the basis upon which policy was ultimately made. The common thread was Powell, who had become Education Minister in December 1982.

The fundamentalists' focus on the issues of evolution and sex education expose their basic beliefs about life and its beginnings; the former in an historical sense, the

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[85] ACHR 46.

[86] ACHR 46.

[87] ACHR 42 and "Final report of the select committee on education in Queensland" 41.

latter in a more existential sense. Such fears have been identified, by those who have studied these things, as characteristic of the fundamentalist mindset.[88] Freeland observed that such fears and insecurities were activated by the changing social mores and changes in the international economic order which reached their zenith in the early nineteen seventies; the more conservative the political and religious culture the greater the anxiety. The onset of economic recession in 1974 braked these changes and "the socio-political climate shifted significantly to the right."[89]

Such a view gives force to one of the lines of argument in this study: that fundamentalism is a recent addition to the religious culture of Queensland and as such simply overlies the pre-existing pietism, the origins of which can be traced back to the beginnings of free settlement in the colony.

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[88] Barbara Hargrove, "The Creationist movement: A sociological view," *Creation/Evolution* 6.1: 30-38; Joseph Gusfield, *Symbolic crusades: status, politics and the American temperance movement* (Urbana: U of Ill Press, 1963); Louis Zurcher and R.George Kirkpatrick, *Citizens for decency: anti-pornography crusades as status defence* (Austin: U of Texas, 1976).
[89] Freeland 7.

CHAPTER 17
THE POWER AND THE PASSION

...This man does not live in reality. He indicates his one eyed thinking...
...He's so far out in outer space and away from reality that I'm not interested.

Joh Bjelke-Petersen speaking about Bishop George Browning in 1986.[1]

I.

The contrast, even conflict, of views between Bjelke-Petersen and the neo-pietists on the one hand, and those religious figures and groups resisting Bjelke-Petersen on issues of public policy on the other hand, grew stronger in the final years of Bjelke-Petersen's premiership. This chapter outlines that contrast in relation to several issues that emerged in the last three years of Bjelke-Petersen's reign: the SEQEB industrial dispute; the issue of electoral justice; conflict between Bjelke-Petersen and Anglican Bishop George Browning on the issue of poverty; and the debate over the availability of condoms.

Church and state came into conflict again in February 1985, when the Queensland government arbitrarily sacked nearly 1000 striking electricity workers and introduced tough anti-picketing legislation to circumscribe the dissent that unionists, some church people and other citizens wished to express against the legislation.

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[1] *SM* 28.9.1986.

The Brisbane-based Anglican primate, Archbishop Sir John Grindrod wrote a private letter to the Premier very early in the dispute, commencing: "My dear Premier, I write as a fellow Christian." The archbishop criticized "the destructive effect on our community" of the government imposed state of emergency and affirmed the right to strike, "as one of the basic rights in a democracy."[2] The Archbishop made his criticism public when on Easter Sunday, the Brisbane *Sunday Mail*'s front page story reported:

> Militant trade unionists have been told to consider the real meaning of Easter and drop their 'confrontationist line' in a special Easter message from the Premier.
>
> ... I hope these people think and contemplate over Easter and realize that they need to adopt a softer line.
>
> ...The real message of Easter is God's love to us through His Saviour, Jesus Christ. The unions should be thinking of creating goodwill to all the people.
>
> ...I would like you to tell them, though, that after Easter the Government will continue...not allowing the unions to break the law.[3]

In these comments Bjelke-Petersen revealed his own inability understand the reconciliatory character ascribed to the Christian festival of Easter, and even the reconciliatory opportunities provided by the festival. Moreover, his reference to "creating goodwill"

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[2] Grindrod to Bjelke-Petersen, February 20, 1985. Copy in possession of writer.
[3] *SM* 7.4.1985.

leaves open the possibility that he was confusing Easter with another Christian festival: Christmas.

Responding to Bjelke-Petersen's "Easter Message" on ABC television, the archbishop defended the right to strike as a "cornerstone of democratic freedom."[4] According to a *Courier-Mail* editorial, he was publicly supported "to some extent" by other church leaders.[5] In fact the support for Grindrod from other church leaders was tepid at best, and best summed up by Catholic Archbishop Francis Rush's comment that, "I wish to neither approve nor condemn either side."[6] Uniting Church moderator Eric Moore was reported as saying "most of his members supported the right to strike - but most also believed a person should be prepared to accept the consequences, even if it meant getting sacked."[7] Lutheran Church Queensland District President Pastor R.J.Mayer said,

> As a Christian, I am concerned about abuse of power in whatever form. Where a government oversteps the bounds of common justice, I have the power to remove it through the ballot box - but when a union abuses such power, I have no power to remove or control the union.[8]

A Brisbane Assembly of God pastor and former trade union member, the Rev David O'Keefe attacked Grindrod's statement in the *Daily Sun* newspaper, which styled the

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[4] *CM* 12.4.1985
[5] *CM* 13.4.1985
[6] *CM* 12.4.1985
[7] *CM* 12.4.1985
[8] *CM* 12.4.1985.

Archbishop's statement as "pro-union".[9] In fact Grindrod's entry into the public debate exposed the threadbare theology that enshrouded the ecclesiastical leadership of Queensland at the time, and in particular the lack of a common understanding of Christian social teaching among the mainline denominations.

It was left to an unnamed group of Queensland University chaplains and Catholic priest Fr Morgan Howe to allude to the doctrine of resistance and publicly put the case for legitimate civil disobedience of bad laws. Whereas his archbishop - Francis Rush - had said that:

> the right to withhold one's labor when employed in an essential industry is a complex question...and I have asked those expert in law and morality to study the question and give their advice,[10]

Howe argued that "the right to withhold one's labor under certain conditions is a fundamental, natural right of every worker in a free society."[11] He was quoted as saying that legislation taking away the right to strike was a "bad law", and that "bad laws carry no moral obligation."[12]

Archbishop Grindrod also received support when Dr Robert Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury, arrived several days

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[9] *DS* 11.4.1985.
[10] *CM* 12.4.1985
[11] *CM* 12.4.1985
[12] *CM* 12.4.1985

later and in the inevitable airport media scrum publicly backed the primate. Bjelke-Petersen responded:

> The job facing church people is to get their followers back into the churches and preach the gospel to them. I am staggered when I go to London and attend church, and I am about the only person there in these great big buildings. My advice is for him to go back to London and try and do his job of filling those seats.[13]

There was no immediate outcry from church leaders and members calling on Bjelke-Petersen to withdraw his remarks, and the issue was soon overtaken by the arrest under the new antipicketing legislation of seventeen members of the re-formed Concerned Christians group - both clergy and laity - who had been singing hymns in the presence of picketing unionists and a large contingent of police.

Government ministers who may have had some qualms about following their leader in an attack on the Archbishop of Canterbury, now didn't hesitate in going on the attack. Industrial Relations minister Vince Lester, a Roman Catholic, said:

> The sooner some members of the clergy, and it seems to be minority groups in the major faiths, understand their role is really saving souls, and not running the politics of the country, the better.[14]

Police Minister Glasson either overstated the case, or showed his ignorance of who was arrested with the

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[13] *CM* 17.4.1985
[14] *Telegraph* 16.4.1985

comment, "I believe it's irresponsible on behalf of any church leader to go out of his way to make trouble."[15] No recognition that only four of those arrested were clergy.

In the Uniting Church, the arrests served to raise the emotional temperature on the issue among church members and threatened a carefully planned strategy developed by church officials to deal with the issue.[16] The strategy was to hold an information evening scheduled for May 4, 1985, to which both parties, government and unions, would be invited to present their case, followed by commentary by a political scientist Dr Kenneth Wiltshire. The gathering would be in the context of worship, with Uniting Church national Assembly Secretary David Gill preaching the sermon. The unions were represented by ALP State President Ian McLean, a Telecom union official, but the government balked at sending a representative. Industrial Relations Minister Lester was willing to come but had a prior engagement. A Uniting Church layman in the Queensland Cabinet, the late John Goleby was positively hostile to the idea. Eventually, it took the intervention of former Queensland Deputy Premier Llew Edwards, also a Uniting Church layman, to get the government to be represented. The government was finally

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[15] *CM* 17.4.1985

[16] For more details of the Uniting Church's response see Harrison, *Baptism* 125-127.

represented by the first term National Party MP from suburban Mt Gravatt, Ian Henderson, a member of Garden City Christian Church, an Assemblies of God congregation.

Persons attending were asked to complete a questionnaire on their reactions to the evening. Almost 93% said they valued it an an exercise in dealing with controversial issues, although only 19% said it had influenced their judgment about the issues in any way.[17] The external participants, Ian McLean, Kenneth Wiltshire and Ian Henderson, also expressed support for this way of dealing with controversial issues, but Henderson added,

> However, I don't go along with the social theological doctrine, almost liberation theology approach that seemed to emerge in part of what was said.[18]

Some members of the Uniting Church Council of Synod meeting held several hours before the information evening had some doubts also. The Council considered a theological statement on the issue prepared primarily by its theological college staff which dealt with the principles of righteousness, reconciliation, justice and pastoral care. However, before the resolutions were moved, several prominent lay members of the Council challenged the church's right to make any statement whatsoever.[19] The officers of the Council indicated

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[17] *Life & Times* (May 22-June 11): 3.
[18] *Life & Times* (May 22-June 11): 3.
[19] Harrison, *Baptism* 127.

that those of that opinion should vote against the resolutions, the first of which read:

> The Council reaffirms the church's faith in the sovereign grace of God over all life, His mercy and compassion for all people in Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit to bring reconciliation of human beings to God and each other.[20]

The Council then received the theological statement which was subsequently sent to Uniting Church parishes for study. The Council authorized the officers of the synod to seek meetings with the Premier and the Trades and Labor Council general secretary to express the church's concerns on the issue. The three man delegation was graciously received by the TLC secretary; the Premier's office indicated that his schedule of commitments was such that he was unable to find the time to confer with three senior churchmen on a matter of public importance.[21]

One month later a Brisbane magistrate acquitted ten of the Concerned Christians. Instructing solicitor Myles McGregor-Lowndes' defence was based around the argument that the Christians were not picketing, and thus harassing the electricity workers as charged under the terms of the Act, but were a symbol of the presence of Christ in a situation of conflict; that they were in fact fulfilling a pastoral role.[22]

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[20] *Life & Times* (May 8-21): 9.
[21] Harrison *Baptism* 127.
[22] McGregor-Lowndes 80.

As the key defence witness Pastor Thom Blake of the Urban Aboriginal Mission put it in his evidence:

> If I can elaborate for a moment on my role as a Minister of the Gospel. . . I might go to the park and sit with an alcoholic, that might not mean that I always approve of his actions. . . I would like to draw that very clear distinction between approving of what someone does and being there with them.[23]

The magistrate interposed with the remark:"I might help you by saying that you might also happen to be the Prison Chaplain". Blake replied: "That's right. I go to prison, yes."[24] The Crown appealed the verdict to the full bench of the state Supreme Court, retaining Ian Callinan QC, fresh from a successful prosecution of Justice Lionel Murphy.

The Concerned Christians' counsel was a former Federal Court Judge, G.E.(Tony) Fitzgerald, who had returned to the bar. In the one day hearing, the bench peppered Callinan with questions, interjections and observations from the commencement of his address. Respondent Blake made the wry observation that, "It's not often you get a judge arguing your case for you."[25] The appeal was dismissed and the Crown did not seek leave to appeal to the High Court.

In summary, there are several significant points to be made about this dispute. First, in terms of our previous

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[23] McGregor-Lowndes 80.
[24] McGregor-Lowndes 80.
[25] Personal interview T.W.Blake (May 1985).

discussion of Bjelke-Petersen's corporatist philosophies in Chapter 11, it is important to note that Bjelke-Petersen used the dispute to break the power of the Electrical Trades Union, and to establish a management sponsored "union" to represent the workers. Secondly, attempts by Archbishop Grindrod and the Uniting Church to have dialogue with Bjelke-Petersen were rebuffed, indicating that by 1985 Bjelke-Petersen was not prepared to concede any legitimate role to the churches - at least the mainline churches - in political debate.

Thirdly, the diversity of views and responses in the churches - especially among the laity - ranged from participation in picketing to pleading quietism. In consequence, their ecclesiastical leaders - with the exception of Archbishop Grindrod - were left ineptly attempting to straddle the middle ground, offering personal opinions and seemingly bereft of the theological and political skills with which to state a position. A survey of Letters To The Editor in the religious press during the Bjelke-Petersen years frequently uncovers the plea from lay correspondents that the church should not become involved in politics.[26] In some cases this was because the correspondents' theology was subservient to their politics; in other cases it was a genuine belief

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[26] In addition to Chapter 12 and Letters To The Editor, *Life & Times* (August 14-27,1985): 12; (June 26-July 9, 1985): 4. Letters To The Editor, *Catholic Leader* 26.4.1985; 5.5.1985; and 12.5.1985.

that politics and religion were separate and distinct realms. Ironically, this belief was not held by the evangelical pietists of nineteenth century Queensland; nor was it a belief held by the charismatic and pentecostal churches during this time.

II.

Perhaps the strongest assertion of quietism at this time came from Salvation Army. The Army made no public statement during the SEQEB dispute, and was later at pains to dissociate itself from comment and criticism of the Queensland electoral system, a system found by the Fitzgerald Commission of Inquiry to be a contributing factor to political corruption.[27] Since the advent of the zonal system of electoral malapportionment in 1949, churches of Queensland displayed little interest in the issue of electoral justice. The only exception to this ecclesiastical disinterest was a resolution by the 1976 Queensland Methodist Conference, on

> ...the need to initiate change in electoral boundaries to avoid undue disparity between electorates so that the value of each person's vote is as nearly as possible equal.[28]

Thus, as the electoral system became a political issue in the nineteen eighties, it was left to two ecumenical bodies, the Queensland Ecumenical Council of Churches

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[27] Fitzgerald, *Report* 357-59.
[28] Queensland Methodist Conference, *Minutes* (1976) 66

(QECC)[29] and the Joint Churches Social Justice group, an ad hoc group of social justice staffers and others from the mainline churches. Prior to the 1986 state election, the Secretary of the QECC, W.B.Stratford wrote to the Governor and all MLAs on the subject of "the gerrymander," calling on the government to "initiate a fair and just voting system."[30] The letter contained ill-disguised allusions to the style of the Bjelke-Petersen government with references to "dictatorships" and "the divine right to power."[31]

The Salvation Army southern Queensland divisional commander Neil Young dissociated the Salvation Army from the letter and criticizing the QECC for making statement without prior consultation with member churches saying, "We have expressed ourselves strongly to the council about making statements without consulting us."[32] Young, however, was unwilling to express himself at all on the subject of the letter.[33] This no doubt pleased Bjelke-Petersen who had said,

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[29] The QECC comprised the Anglican, Greek Orthodox, Serbian Orthodox, Uniting Churches, the Salvation Army and the Society of Friends. The Lutheran and Roman Catholic Churches had observer status. The QECC is not to be confused with the more conservative Queensland Council of Churches, discussed in Chapter 12 which is made up of the Baptist, Churches of Christ, Presbyterian and Uniting Churches, and the Salvation Army.
[30] W.B.Stratford to The Government and Opposition In Queensland 7th April, 1986.
[31] Stratford.
[32] *CM* 12.4.1986.
[33] *CM* 12.4.1986.

> I don't think it is part of the role of church leaders to get into something of this nature. It strikes me as being a little bit far out in orbit coming from the churches. It seems to be political.[34]

Two months later in an incident that made the newspapers albeit briefly, the Salvation Army apologized to Bjelke-Petersen for comments made about the electoral system and abuses of power in Queensland by one of its officers, Major Graham Harris, in material submitted for presentation at a Joint Churches Social Justice Group election year seminar. Harris made observations on several fronts. First, he contended that,

> It was right and proper that the Roman Catholic Church was a major force in bringing down the (Philippines) government. With the possible exception of Queensland, where an unjust electoral system perpetuates a government there are no such abuses of power in Australia. If the government is abusing its power, as it does in Queensland, then the church should oppose it as it has done through many of its members in the past year.[35]

Secondly he attacked the influence of the "lunatic fringe," who he said, "may join a certain political leader in labeling everything that is not of his persuasion as 'socialist'."[36]

However, after his views became public, Harris subsequently retracted his statements saying, "I was not having a go at the Premier. I would not want in any way

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[34] CM 10.4.1986.
[35] *Australian* 8.6.1986.
[36] *Australian* 8.6.1986.

appear to oppose the government of Queensland," and the Salvation Army's public relations director Major Ray Allan reportedly made the comment that, "the government had always received the army's full support."[37] Bjelke-Petersen accepted Harris' retraction, and quoted Harris as having told him, "The Salvos are right behind you."[38] The Salvation Army did not deny Bjelke-Petersen's statement.

Obviously Harris was under pressure to recant from his superiors, who, without any public pressure from Bjelke-Petersen, demonstrated in both instances an acquiescence in the political status quo that would have shamed William Booth. For the Salvation Army, pietism was replaced by a conflict between quietism and resistance.

It was the SEQEB dispute which marked the high tide of Bjelke-Petersen's attempts to intimidate the churches into acquiescing with his policies or exclude them from the political debate.

III.

The two church-state entanglements of note that occurred during the last years of Bjelke-Petersen's premiership - the controversy over Anglican Bishop George Browning's remarks on poverty in 1986, and a fracas over the

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[37] *DS* 10.6.1986
[38] *DS* 10.6.1986

availability of condoms saw the leadership of the major churches almost refusing to take Bjelke-Petersen seriously.

Browning's address to an ecumenical Social Justice Week forum on the eve of the 1986 Queensland state election drew strong criticism from Bjelke-Petersen, and equally strong support from the church. In his address Browning said,

> Poverty in itself has a polarizing effect on the community... This polarization is probably even more acute in Queensland than in other parts of Australia, for here we are encouraged to see things only in terms that are black and white. For instance if one has a concern for the poor then one is called a socialist. If one has a desire for peace, then one is called a communist, if one has a desire to maintain the environment for future generations then one must be anti-development and against private industry.[39]

Browning proposed seven positive actions that could be taken to alleviate poverty. One of was "to be far more honest about the realities of the world in which we live," and this meant that,

> When those in power refuse to be accountable, either cannot or will not answer questions, appear to have no grasp of the facts they are purporting to present, we should not laugh at them, we should just refuse to vote for them. People who govern incompetently perpetuate poverty.[40]

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[39] George Browning, "An Address on poverty given at the Roma Street Forum, Friday 26th September 1986 by the Rt Rev George Browning Bishop for the Northern Region, Anglican Diocese of Brisbane and Chairman of the Social Issues Committee." Typescript in possession of author.
[40] Browning 3.

Bjelke-Petersen responded *ad hominem* with vintage vitriol:

> ...This man does not live in reality. He indicates his one eyed thinking,
> ...He's so far out in outer space and away from reality that I'm not interested.
> ...He's obviously a socialist for sure,
> ...For goodness sake, tell him to go down to a socialist state where he have to pay much more taxes...[41]

Having trailed the bait, Browning now toyed with the big fish he had landed by saying,

> I'm fascinated and rather glad the Premier has reacted in this way. It shows he clearly sees the remarks as applicable to himself, although I did not direct at him specifically. It's a complete validation of what I've said.[42]

Browning reported a strong favourable reaction in telephone calls to his home, and received editorial support from the *Courier-Mail* and *Sunday-Mail*,[43] as well as the religious press.[44] Perhaps the tide was beginning to turn.

The next synod of the Anglican Diocese of Rockhampton resolved, "mindful of the church's prophetic calling," to affirm, "the right of church leaders to speak out on public issues."[45] Moving the resolution, the rector of Wandal, the Rev Doug Edmunds attacked the argument that the church should 'stick to spiritual matters' as,

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[41] *SM* 28.9.1986.
[42] *SM* 28.9.1986.
[43] *CM* 2.10.1986 and *SM* 5.10.1986.
[44] *Church Scene* 31.10.1986.
[45] *Church Scene* 8.5.1987.

> an old heresy that sees a distinction between the material and the spiritual, a distinction which has no place in the incarnational theology of the Christian faith.[46]

While the Rockhampton diocese is based on the Labor Party strongholds of Gladstone and Rockhampton, and encompasses all the Central Queensland mining communities, the synod resolution undoubtedly gave those bishops who over the years had borne the brunt of Bjelke-Petersen's belligerence, some hope that yet there remained many in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

IV.

However, before his demise, Bjelke-Petersen had one last battle with the leaders of the major churches. In August 1987, as alarm about the spread of AIDS increased, Health Minister and premiership aspirant Ahern brought a submission to Cabinet requesting that condoms be made more widely available, in particular through the legalization of their sale through vending machines. Bjelke-Petersen opposed his health minister. There was a heated debate on the issue between Bjelke-Petersen and Ahern in the Cabinet meeting. Ahern argued that it was a public health issue not a moral issue. Bjelke-Petersen's arguments were that to increase the availability of condoms was to encourage sexual promiscuity. Cabinet opted to place the matter in the hands of the premier for

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[46] *Church Scene* 8.5.1987.

resolution and Bjelke-Petersen announced that he would be seeking the views of the churches on the matter.[47]

This announcement did not reflect a desire to involve the spiritual leaders of the community in the decision-making process about difficult ethical issues. It was a political move designed to outmanoeuvre Ahern whose popularity among the general population and the National Party Parliamentary wing was growing.

Public reaction showed skepticism of Bjelke-Petersen's motives from the beginning. Uniting Church theologian, Professor Han Spykerboer, who was chairman of his church's national social responsibility and justice committee, said he was "very dubious" about Bjelke-Petersen's decision to consult the churches:

> This is a very hypocritical attitude . . . I would have liked him to seek the Church's view on the matters of contract labour and strikes.[48]

The media took the Premier to task over the contradiction. The *Daily Sun* editorialized,

> In yet another chapter of his curious relationship with the churches and clergy, Sir Joh - who has frequently lambasted those of the cloth who presume to comment upon secular issues in this state - invited the churches to pronounce on condom vending machines.
>
> He issued the invitation [to the churches] under such circumstances that it would not be to cynical to suggest his [Bjelke-Petersen's] motive was to stifle dissent in his Cabinet by the more

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[47] *CM* 4.8.1987.
[48] *CM* 5.8.1987.

> progressive elements who are alive to the peril AIDS poses.[49]

It was a theme echoed the following day in the Townsville *Daily Bulletin* editorial.[50]

On this occasion, the churches did not play into the Premier's hands. Some ten denominations were approached. When the responses were received Bjelke-Petersen claimed the seven of them backed his views.[51] Neither the churches nor the Premier saw fit to make their responses public, although the Anglican, Catholic and Uniting Church responses drew substantially on existing public church policy documents on AIDS. The Anglican response contained in a letter to the Premier from Archbishop Grindrod was most unpalatable to the Premier, and was leaked by the Premier's office enabling the Premier to then go on the attack against the archbishop in an attempt to neutralize its impact.[52]

The Uniting Church issued a statement on AIDS to all its congregations, which did not mention condom vending machines, but was sufficiently ambiguous in its wording so that it could be interpreted as supporting the Health Minister's view:

> The Church believes that it is not possible to impose Christian morality upon people by way of

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[49] *DS* 21.8.1987.
[50] Townsville *Daily Bulletin* 22.8.1987?
[51] *CM* 21.8.1987.
[52] *CM* 20.8.1987.

> legislation and supports actions by the community that reduce the possibility of AIDS being spread.[53]

Likewise, the Catholic Church avoided mention of condom vending machines. Archbishop Rush was reported to have forwarded a covering note along with a statement on AIDS prepared by the Catholic Bishops of Australia.[54]

The Anglican Archbishop's considered response, like that of the Catholic and Uniting Churches did not specifically mention condom vending machines. The archbishop did, however, state the wider moral dilemmas facing the government in its consideration of the issue. Archbishop Grindrod wrote:

> Government may have to take action, as the lesser of two evils, to save people from themselves, for sexual desire is powerful and elemental and can overthrow rational behaviour...
>
> If, therefore, it is judged that the general population is being put at risk by people not employing prophylactic measures such as the use of condoms because these are difficult to obtain, then it would seem a right course of action on the grounds of public health first to check their availability, and then if necessary, to increase that availability.
>
> The government's problem is a very grave one. If it neglected to take action to stave off a disease which could become a destructive plague, it would itself be facing an accusation of moral neglect.[55]

In his understated prose the archbishop not only took the high ground in the debate, with his reference to possible

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[53] *Telegraph* 20.8.1987.
[54] *CM* 21.8.1987.
[55] *CM* 20.8.1987.

moral neglect, but gave the Premier an elementary lesson in public administration with his reference to the need to ascertain the availability of condoms.

Bjelke-Petersen was stung by the Anglican response. "Joh slams bishop over condoms," ran one headline.[56] Bjelke-Petersen was quoted as saying, "Churches would cause a moral derailment of society if they backed calls for legalization of condom vending machines."[57] He continued:

> I am surprised that any Christian Church leader could even suggest that governments should take actions which will be read as acceptance of sexual promiscuity as a community standard.[58]

The Premier's response drew more comment from the editorial writers. "Obviously, Sir Joh did not expect anything from the churches but support for his view that condom vending machines should be banned," opined the Townsville *Daily Bulletin*,

> ...It appears that some in the churches have a greater understanding of society and concern to save unnecessary deaths from AIDS than Sir Joh imagined."[59]

Of other religious denominations approached by Bjelke-Petersen, the Christian Outreach Centre reportedly rejected the notion that condoms promoted safe sex, and the Baptist Union executive declared that its decision

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[56] *DS* 21.8.1987.
[57] *CM* 21.8.1987.
[58] *CM* 21.8.1987.
[59] Townsville *Daily Bulletin* 22.8.1987

would be based on "scriptural principles".[660] On August 31, the Queensland Cabinet agreed to maintain the ban.

The condom vending machine controversy was different from previous church-state clashes. Leaders of the major churches and in large measure their members, as well as the press and the public, all recognized the political motivations behind Bjelke-Petersen's desire for consultation. Secondly, to fix on the question of condom vending machines was recognized again by the churches, the public and even the National Party as a trivialization of a major public health issue: the prevention of AIDS. Thirdly Bjelke-Petersen misjudged the churches, and found himself unable to manipulate them for his own ends. Accustomed to telling church leaders to keep out of the political arena, he invited them in, assuming that they would support his position. Instead, the major churches chose to focus on the broader issue of AIDS prevention, and as a bonus, the Premier received an artfully worded homily from the Anglicans on the proper functions and responsibilities of governments in a democratic and pluralist society. Finally, Bjelke-Petersen operated off the assumption that his own position was the only legitimate Christian perspective on the issue; an assumption which bedevilled his relationships with the churches for most of his career.

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[660] Brisbane *Telegraph* 20.8.1987.

Bjelke-Petersen's handling of the controversy was another sign of his waning political influence. Even though Cabinet was cowed and refused Ahern's submission, there was disquiet in the party room and in the party administration. Backbencher Ian Henderson, who would be expected to follow Bjelke-Petersen's line on this issue as a prominent member of the Garden City (Assemblies of God) Christian Church displayed a compassion lacking in the Premier's absolutist stance. "I have no wish to pass the death sentence on anyone regardless of how immoral or promiscuous they may have been," Henderson told the ABC's *7.30 Report*. He claimed that eight other National Party backbenchers supported Ahern's submission,[61] and at party headquarters, President Sir Robert Sparkes expressed disapproval of Cabinet's decision.[62]

The support offered to Bjelke-Petersen by the Christian Outreach Centre in the condom vending machine controversy was but an example of the relationship that had developed between the premier and the neo-pentecostals. That relationship is the subject of the chapter that follows.

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[61] *DS* 2.9.1987.
[62] *DS* 2.9.1987.

CHAPTER 18.

WHITE SHOES AND GOLDEN HALOS

No matter how disturbing the criticism, I must never be discouraged by public opinion... In Jesus I have access to knowledge and wisdom.

National Party MLA Ian Henderson.[1]

"WATCHOUT! Beneath the white shoes, jackboots!"

Letter to the Editor,
The Australian 1987.[2]

I.

The day before announcing the date of the 1986 Queensland State election, Bjelke-Petersen went to church. But not to his normal place of worship, the St John's Lutheran Church in Kingaroy. This time he was guest speaker at the Garden City Christian Church, Brisbane's largest Assembly of God Church in suburban Mt Gravatt. The next morning Brisbane's *Daily Sun* newspaper ran a large page two photograph of Bjelke-Petersen standing, head bowed in prayer, during the service. Bjelke-Petersen told the 1000 strong congregation participating in a "Pray for Australia" rally that Australia needed a Christian Prime Minister to end the nation's economic crisis.[3]

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[1] Ian Henderson, "Christian Political Leadership," 3pp., 15.4.1984. Copy in possession of the writer.
[2] *Australian* 9.3.1987.
[3] *DS* 22.9.1986.

Unacknowledged in the news report was the fact that Mt Gravatt was one of the handful of metropolitan electorates won by the Nationals from the Liberals in the 1983 state election, as part of their successful bid to govern Queensland without the support of their former Liberal coalition partners. To remain in power in its own right the National Party needed to retain the adjoining seats of Mt Gravatt, Greenslopes and Mansfield. Within the bounds of these electorates were located three neo-pentecostal mega-churches: Garden City Christian Church at Mt Gravatt, Christian Outreach Centre at Mansfield, and Holland Park Baptist Church, which having outgrown its church building in suburban Holland Park conducted some worship services in Mansfield High School assembly hall. Each had over 1000 people attending worship on Sunday during the mid nineteen eighties.

In previous decades, before the emergence of the neo-pentecostal mega-churches, the Pentecostals had eschewed political engagement. The deprivation theory of pentecostal origins would suggest that it was the pressing, indeed overwhelming, demands and complexities of modern social and political life which were instrumental in the emergence of pentecostalism in the first place. However, in December 1974, the Queensland Conference of the Assemblies of God wrote to both Whitlam and Bjelke-Petersen, "assuring them of our prayers," amid

what it termed "the current national and international crisis." In reporting the Conference resolution, an anonymous Pentecostal pastor (probably Bartholomew) wrote, "God's will is good government. The saints have a definite duty and responsibility. See 1 Timothy 2: 1,2."[43] This view of the relationship between church and state, based on the Pauline injunction urging prayer for those in authority, 'that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way,' is essentially quietist. Such was the traditional pentecostal view.

In 1986, Ian Henderson, the National Party member for Mt Gravatt, and a member of the Garden City Christian Church was typical of the neo-pentecostals who rejected such quietism. Henderson, a former state high school deputy principal, aggressively promoted himself as a 'Christian' member of Parliament. Of his political philosophy, Henderson wrote:

> As a Christian member of Parliament I have to keep asking myself a simple question - IS IT THE WILL OF GOD? As I search Scripture, I keep reminding myself of a great truth: What was God's will as revealed in Scripture, still is God's will today. Thus, my original call from God, "Follow me" - is both my original and my continuing ministry as an MP. I believe that the battle is the Lords' [sic] and that I never need doubt his belief in me. My weapons are mighty through God. He indwells me. His Holy Spirit is my comforter, counsellor, helper, advocate,

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[43] Assemblies of God, Queensland Fellowship, *News Digest* December 1974.

> intercessor, strengthener and standby, (Joh [sic] 14:26) If God is for me, who can be against me? [5]

Such a philosophy reveals Henderson not only tending towards fundamentalism, given his bibliocentric - as opposed to Christocentric - view of Christianity; but also tending towards theocracy rather than democracy in his conception of the nature of the state. For he continued:

> No matter how disturbing the criticism, I must never be discouraged by public opinion. In Jesus I have access to knowledge and wisdom. I know that as I walk in the light of His word, His wisdom will be mine in every circumstance (1 Cor 1:30).[6]

In pursuit of this vocation as a 'Christian' politician, Henderson eagerly solicited invitations to speak at church groups outside his electorate and promised to visit every church in the electorate twice a year as a guest.[7] Henderson regularly ran advertisements in the *Catholic Leader*, official organ of the Brisbane Roman Catholic Archdiocese saying,

> Ian Henderson is a strong pro-life, Christian member of Parliament who strongly supports the non-state school system.[8]

This may seem ironical coming from a man who spent two decades as a teacher in the state school system. However, in political terms, the advertisement was designed to

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[5] Henderson 1.
[6] Henderson 2.
[7] Attachment to Henderson dated 15.4.1984.
[8] *Catholic Leader* 12.10.1986.

capture the conservative Catholic vote in his then marginal electorate. In the 1986 election Henderson was also reported to have volunteer canvassers from Garden City Christian Church working on his behalf and asserted that in the event of an equal contest in his seat between himself and the Liberal candidate, "then I am bold enough to predict that the outcome will depend on the Christian vote."[9]

The neighbouring electorate of Greenslopes was held in 1986 by Leisha Harvey, a former colleague of Henderson's at Springwood State High School, who purported to share Henderson's religious beliefs. While acknowledging that it was "trendy for politicians to say they are Christians," Harvey argued that the National Party's policy on moral issues made it the natural beneficiary of the votes of Christians.[10] Harvey's equation of Christianity with morality, and of morality with the policies of the National Party, is exemplary of the neo-pietist influence on the religious and political culture of Queensland.

The rise of what was seen as a Christian faction within the Parliamentary National Party caused some heartburn during 1985 among backbenchers vying for Cabinet positions. The alleged faction centred around the weekly

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[9] Murray Hogarth, "God vote a godsend for Joh," *Times On Sunday* 26.10.1986.
[10] *Times On Sunday* 26.10.1986.

breakfasts of the Parliamentary Christian Fellowship, which had become the exclusive preserve of the National Party. Regular participants in the meetings organized by backbencher Gordon Simpson (Cooroora), included Cabinet members, Bill Gunn, Ivan Gibbs, Lin Powell, and Geoff Muntz and before his death, John Goleby.[11] Simpson and Goleby were active members of the Uniting Church and were representative of the traditional evangelical pietism of Methodism. However, Gunn and Muntz were regarded in their local constituencies as inactive members of the Uniting Church and were most frequently represented at worship and church functions by their spouses. Powell had encountered considerable conflict and criticism within his local Presbyterian Church at Hervey Bay during the time of his divorce and re-marriage in 1985.[12] Nonetheless, all saw themselves as making a Christian contribution to politics and in particular in upholding what they viewed as the principles of Christian morality within the government. Their concerns embraced abortion law reform and liquor law reform, and the group was considered to be influential in the pre-selection process for Goleby's successor in Redlands, working against candidates "whom they did not think had a sufficiently healthy lifestyle."[13] Coming from electorates outside the Brisbane metropolitan area, the members mentioned

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[11] *DS* 18.11.1985.
[12] *CM* 13.9.1985.
[13] *DS* 18.11.1985.

above represented the traditional pietism of the religious culture of Queensland. In 1983 the old pietism was re-inforced by the new.

In Greenslopes, Harvey had bested sitting Liberal member Bill Hewitt for the seat in 1983. A blue-ribbon Liberal seat, it had formerly been held by Liberal Transport Minister Keith Hooper. A self-styled "religious gypsy," Harvey was reported to be attending more than one local church in her electorate to keep up her profile during the campaign.[14] Like Henderson, Harvey also advertised in the *Catholic Leader*.[15]

Between 1983 and 1986, the Mansfield electorate was held for the National Party by Bill Klaus, a former Liberal who had changed parties after losing Liberal Party endorsement prior to the 1983 election. Klaus retired at the 1986 election, and in his place the National Party endorsed Craig Sherrin, a former teacher on the staff of Education Minister Lin Powell. Like Henderson and Harvey, Sherrin - a deacon in the Church of Christ - promoted himself through the the *Catholic Leader* drawing attention to his "long term experience in local church and youth work,"[16] and identified with the neo-pentecostals.[17]

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[14] *Times On Sunday* 26.10.1986.
[15] *Catholic Leader* 19.10.1986.
[16] *Catholic Leader* 21.9.1986.
[17] *Times On Sunday* 26.10.1986.

The campaigns of Henderson, Harvey and Sherrin were supported by personal appearances by Bjelke-Petersen in the area, ostensibly on religious business. On October 19 1986, shortly before the election, Bjelke-Petersen opened a pastors' conference at the Christian Outreach Centre, billed as "the largest ministerial gathering of its type in Australia."[18]

II.

Some journalistic commentary on the 1986 Queensland state election referred to the existence of "Brisbane's south-side Bible Belt" encompassing the Mt Gravatt, Greenslopes and Mansfield electorates.[19] Table 4 details the number of persons in selected suburbs both in and adjoining those electorates who identifying themselves as Pentecostal according to the Census in 1976 and 1986. In percentage terms, it appears that Pentecostalism made significant gains in the area between 1976, when Pentecostals were first counted separately in the Census, and 1986.

In 1986, the highest concentrations of Pentecostals were in Mansfield (3%) and Wishart (2.9%). More than 2% of the population identified themselves as Pentecostal in Mt Gravatt (2.3%), Upper Mt Gravatt (2.3%) and Mt Gravatt East (2.3%). Suburbs with a population of Pentecostals

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[18] *CM* 20.10.1986.
[19] *Times On Sunday* 26.10.1986.

above the state average of 1.2% in 1986 were Coopers Plains (1.7%), Nathan (1.5%), Holland Park West (1.4%), Holland Park (1.3%), Salisbury (1.3%), and Sunnybank (1.3%). However, when the actual numbers are considered, the impact is more modest, for the numbers involved are very small: an increase across all fourteen suburbs from 772 persons in 1976 to 1455 persons in 1986. In the suburb of Mansfield the growth in the number of Pentecostals between 1976 and 1986 was greatest: from 48 to 236, the largest of any suburb. In Wishart, the numbers grew from 55 in 1976 to 199 in 1986.

So was the number of pentecostals sufficient to influence the outcome of elections? Henderson estimated that what he termed "the righteousness vote"[20] at 10-15 per cent in Mt Gravatt, Mansfield and Greenslopes in 1986. If such an assertion is not an exaggeration, then members of other denominations must have supported the views and policies of the National Party candidates.

Table 5 details the proportionate strengths of all Christian denominations in 1986 for the same suburbs. In general terms, most denominations have representation above the state average in all the selected suburbs. The

[20] *Times On Sunday* 26.10.1986.

TABLE 4: PENTECOSTAL ADHERENTS IN SELECTED BRISBANE SUBURBS 1976 AND 1986

SUBURB	1976 N	1976 %	1986 N	1986 %	INCREASE %	POPULATION GROWTH %
MT GRAVATT	41	1.19	70	2.30	70.70	-9.68
UPPER MT GRAVATT	110	1.18	180	2.30	63.60	-15.73
MT GRAVATT EAST	159	1.55	193	2.20	21.30	75.22
MANSFIELD	48	0.65	236	3.00	391.60	7.23
WISHART	55	1.33	199	2.90	261.80	69.76
MACGREGOR	90	1.67	59	1.10	-34.44	2.91
NATHAN	14	1.40	18	1.50	28.57	18.40
ROBERTSON	4	0.42	15	0.05	275.01	320.80
SUNNYBANK	48	0.65	97	1.30	106.30	6.01
SUNNYBANK HILLS	62	1.42	123	1.10	98.30	245.10
SALISBURY	17	0.26	72	1.30	323.52	-17.04
COOPERS PLAINS	34	0.67	70	1.70	105.80	-17.20
HOLLAND PARK	14	0.18	52	1.30	271.40	-6.77
HOLAND PARK W	76	1.23	71	1.40	-6.57	-15.68

TABLE 5

DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATIONS FOR SELECTED BRISBANE SUBURBS 1986 CENSUS

DENOMINATION	MT GRAVATT	MT GRAVATT E	UPPER M.GRAVATT	MANSFIELD	WISHART	MACGREGOR	NATHAN
ANGLICAN	22.9	24.2	24	22.3	21.5	22.9	21.6
BAPTIST	2.1	1.6	1.5	2.1	1.2	2.3	2
BRETHERN	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.02
CATHOLIC	27	25.1	28.4	26.1	27.9	27.1	25.9
CHURCHES OF CHRIST	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.4
CONGREGATIONAL	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0
GREEK ORTHODOX	2.6	2.4	2.5	5.3	2.9	6	3.1
JEHOVAHS WITNESSES	0.2	0.2	0.3	3	0.5	0.1	0.2
LUTHERAN	1.3	1.5	1.9	1.6	1.8	1.9	1.1
METHODIST	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PENTECOSTAL	2.3	2.2	2.3	3	2.9	1.1	1.5
PRESBYTERIAN	4	4	3.4	3.9	3.8	4.2	2.7
SALVATION ARMY	0.9	1.1	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.5
SDA	0.4	0.3	0.5	1.1	1.2	0.8	0.2
UNITING	11.5	9.8	9.3	9.7	9.3	9.2	9.3
OTHER CHRISTIAN	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.4	3.9	2.9
TOTAL CHRISTIAN	79.7	77.1	79.3	80.4	78.2	80.6	71.5
OTHER RELIGION	1.9	1.2	1.1	1	1	0.7	1.9
UNSPECIFIED	18.4	21.7	19.6	18.6	20.8	18.9	26.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATIONS FOR SELECTED BRISBANE SUBURBS 1986 CENSUS <CONTINUED>

ROBERTSON	SUNNYBANK	SUNNYBANK HILLS	SALISBURY	COOPERS PLAINS	HOLLAND PARK	HOLLAND PARK W.	QLD	
24.9	25.4	24.1	23	23.6	24.3	22.3	24.1	ANGLICAN
1.3	1.7	2.2	2.6	1.5	2.3	2.9	1.8	BAPTIST
0.2	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.2	BRETHERN
28.7	26.8	26.6	29.3	25.4	29	27.3	25.4	CATHOLIC
0.6	0.7	0.3	0.3	1.2	0.5	0.3	0.5	CHURCHES OF CHRIST
0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0	0.2	CONGREGATIONAL
5.5	1.9	3	1.7	1	2.5	3.1	1.2	GREEK ORTHODOX
0.3	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.6	JEHOVAHS WITNESSES
1.2	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.9	1.3	1.7	1.7	LUTHERAN
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	METHODIST
0.5	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.7	1.3	1.4	1.2	PENTECOSTAL
4.7	4.3	4	4.3	4.4	4.6	4.2	4.3	PRESBYTERIAN
0.4	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.6	SALVATION ARMY
0.8	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.5	0.03	SDA
8.9	10	10.9	10.2	9.5	7.7	9.4	9.1	UNITING
3.5	3.9	3.6	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.3	OTHER CHRISTIAN
81.5	79	79	73.8	76.1	78.5	78.1	74.23	TOTAL CHRISTIAN
1.2	0.7	1	0.6	0.9	1.3	0.8	0.9	OTHER RELIGION
17.3	20.3	20	25.8	23	20.2	21.1	24.87	UNSPECIFIED
100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	TOTAL

Anglicans, Uniting Church and Roman Catholics are several percentage points above their state average. Of the denominations traditionally regarded as evangelical or theologically conservative, the Baptists are better represented than across the state; the Presbyterians and the Salvation Army maintain their state averages, although the Salvation Army is comparatively stronger in Mansfield.

Only the Churches of Christ and the Lutherans - whose strength remains in rural Queensland - are fewer than their state average. However, the greatest variation between the state averages and the figures for these selected suburbs is found among Orthodox adherents. Across the state, 1.2% of the population identify themselves as Orthodox. In these suburbs up to 6% in Macgregor and 5.3% of the population in Mansfield are Orthodox. Indeed, in statistical terms a far better case could be made for the argument that these suburbs contain strong enclaves of Orthodoxy, rather than the argument for a fundamentalist 'bible belt.'

Overall, Mansfield and Macgregor are the suburbs with the least irreligion. Respectively 80.6% and 80.4% of its inhabitants claimed to belong to a Christian denomination; compared to only 74% of the rest of Queenslanders. Even though the Pentecostals provided footsoldiers for letterboxing and auditoria full of

people for the National Party to claim the results it did, it needed to draw the votes of members of other denominations. The *Catholic Leader* advertising shows that special efforts were made to court the votes of Catholics. The traditional pietism of former Methodists within the Uniting Church who had previously voted Liberal would have provided some assistance to the Nationals; as would several small enclaves of charismatic renewal within the mainline churches in places like Sunnybank Uniting Church, and to a lesser extent Salisbury-Coopers Plains Uniting Church.[21] Stronger loci of neo-pentecostalism within the Uniting Church were to be found at Kangaroo Point and Logan, outside the area under discussion.

The greater degree of innate religiosity of the area would also have assisted, but to argue a determinative relationship between the number of Pentecostals in the area and the election outcome is simply not possible. All that can be concluded is that there are higher concentrations of pentecostals in the area than the rest of the state. However, Henderson, Harvey and Sherrin all won their seats.

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[21] No work has been done on the influence of neo-pentecostalism in mainline churches since Williams in 1977.

III.

The influence of neo-pietism was not only brought to bear on the 1986 Queensland state election. Early in 1987 as the Joh for PM campaign gathered momentum, Bjelke-Petersen claimed his crusade had "church support". Clark Taylor of the Christian Outreach Centre gave Bjelke-Petersen a public endorsement from his pulpit:

> I support any candidate who would stand for godly government, Christian morality in society and Christian education. If Joh supports that, we recommend they support him. We are for those who are for God. The church has to be involved.[22]

Like Leisha Harvey during the 1986 state selection campaign, Taylor equated the public expression of Christianity with morality, and morality with the personage of Bjelke-Petersen, leader and representative of the National Party. Representatives of three mainline churches immediately eschewed such partisanship, but Taylor's statement demonstrated how the resurgence of neo-pietism had brought the religious culture of Queensland full circle. What difference was there between Taylor's endorsement of Bjelke-Petersen and the endorsement of Griffith by the evangelical constituency a century before?[23] Moreover, as well as putting paid to quietism, Taylor demolished Bjelke-Petersen's own argument that the churches should concern themselves with

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[22] *CM* 31.3.1987.
[23] *Queensland Evangelical Standard* 20.2.1885.

'spiritual' and not 'political' matters; his statement conceding the point the Concerned Christians had been making for a decade.

However, there is a sustained irony in the 'godly government' argument. Under the 'godly government' of the National Party government in Queensland, corruption flourished. In the 1989 Queensland state election Henderson, Harvey and Sherrin were all defeated, and Harvey was subsequently sentenced to a jail term for misuse of ministerial expenses. Those who mounted the moral high ground, found the legacy of corruption was lead in their saddlebags.

IV.

What in the character of neo-pentecostalism enabled its adherents to identify so strongly with Bjelke-Petersen and the National Party in Queensland? The broader question of the relationship between populism and fundamentalism is discussed in the following chapter; the focus here is on neo-pentecostalism. Was the affinity between the neo-pentecostals and the National Party inevitable? Political scientists have long attempted to find some some clear link between political conservatism and theological conservatism.[24] Some have held that the

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[24] R.K.D.Smith 45. Smith found, "Nowhere, not even on moral issues, was the blanket conservatism so often assumed to exist among Protestant churchgoers evident." Smith surveyed nine Protestant congregations in Brisbane: three Anglican, three Uniting and three Baptist. See also

character of religion makes religiosity almost an *a priori* indicator of political conservatism.[25]

In Queensland the catalyst for linking the National Party and the Pentecostals was the personality of Bjelke-Petersen. Quite public about his own religious beliefs and practices, yet constantly in conflict with the mainline churches whom some of the Pentecostals viewed as apostate, Bjelke-Petersen formed a natural link with the pentecostals. The link in turn allowed Bjelke-Petersen to highlight further his own religiosity when it was electorally helpful.

Furthermore, one of the characteristics of the neo-pentecostal churches was their acceptance of, and perhaps dependence on strong leaders like Trevor Chandler at the Christian Life Centre, Clark Taylor of Brisbane's Christian Outreach Centre and Reg Klimionok of Garden City Christian Church.[26] This made it easier to accept an authoritarian political leader, especially if he was a fellow believer. In fact many of the reasons which led people into the National Party are probably those which led them into the neo-pentecostalism in the first place.

Robert Wuthnow, "Religious Conservatism and Conservatism: in search of an elusive relationship," in C.Y.Glock, ed., *Religion in sociological perspective* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1973).

[25] K.D.Wald, D.E.Owen and S.S.Hill, "Churches as political communities," *American Political Science Review* 82.2 (1988) 531-548.

[26] Williams 55.

In a time of continuing economic uncertainty, the search for certainty, coupled with the disillusionment with the more traditional religious and political organizations, and a desire to be associated with success, are all significant factors.

But the linkages between neo-pentecostalism and Bjelke-Petersen's National Party were not only a matter of personality types and leadership styles, but also of ideology. In political terms the most significant feature of the neo-pentecostal churches is their emphasis on 'prosperity theology', discussed in Chapter 5. Sherrin observed after a worship service at the Christian Outreach Centre in October 1986 attended by Bjelke-Petersen, "If you changed the Biblical references to business ones, it could have been Sir Joh talking."[27] Christian theology and political ideology had become interchangeable; only the illustrations were different.

V.

Of course not all the attempts to put godly men in government were successful and nor did all the faithful prosper. In the 1983 state election, Pat Blake, an insurance broker and secretary of the Christian Outreach Centre, was endorsed as the National Party candidate for the Brisbane suburban seat of Stafford. Blake's religious beliefs and affiliations were integral to his political

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[27] *Times On Sunday* 26.10.1986.

campaign. The seat was won by the Labor candidate, ALP President Dr D.J.Murphy, defeating Gygar, the incumbent Liberal who ran third on the primary vote behind Blake.

However, Dr Murphy died of cancer shortly after. Blake contested the ensuing by-election and lost again; this time to the previously defeated Liberal. Blake's difficulties then multiplied. He was the subject of a lengthy Fraud Squad investigation into the alleged misappropriation of $120,000 from his insurance broking business, and amid the stress of that investigation suffered a heart attack.[28] A police report clearing Blake was released in late September 1986 after Parliament had risen for the state election. Blake was quoted as saying he was no longer a National Party member and hoped to pursue a political career as a independent.[29] He contested the seat of Aspley as an independent in the 1986 Queensland state election.

The seat of Aspley, a blue ribbon conservative seat neighbouring Stafford in Brisbane's northern suburbs had been lost to the National Party by the Liberals in the 1983 election. The successful candidate was Brian Cahill, a former member of both the Labor and Liberal parties, who while not a member of the charismatic movement, had strong links with the anti-abortion movement. Several of

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[28] *SM* 21.9.1986.
[29] *SM* 21.9.1986.

Cahill's escapades during the previous three years had severely embarrassed the Nationals and he was disendorsed by the National Party early in 1986. The Nationals endorsed Beryce Nelson, the former Liberal member who had joined the Nationals after her defeat by Cahill in 1983. Cahill threatened to stand as an independent, and a number of his supporters outside the electorate attempted to join local National Party branches, and were refused renewal of their National Party membership in the process. One such person was Rona Joyner, who said

> It looks like a purge of Christians and what they've done is un-Christian and undemocratic. The National Party is supposed to fear and honour God, but its moved away from this and we need the government restored to a Christian stance.[30]

Joyner's husband and three sons were among thirty people whose continuity of membership was refused by the National Party, amid suggestions from National Party President Sir Robert Sparkes that they were engaged in branch stacking. According to Sparkes,

> . . . it was obvious there was a deliberate move by people outside Aspley to come in and stack branches in the electorate. This nonsense is going to stop and stop very soon.[31]

Sparkes on a number of occasion attempted to play down what he perceived to be the National Party's wowser image.[32] A political pragmatist rather than an

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[30] *CM* 12.9.1986
[31] *CM* 12.9.1986.
[32] *DS* 2.9.1987.

ideologue, he clearly considered it was to the party's electoral benefit to be without the membership of ideologues like Joyner. However, another group of ideologues was waiting in the wings.

VI.

One neo-pietist group which developed a specific political agenda - and an accompanying public profile - was the Logos Foundation. Founded in 1969 in New Zealand by a former Baptist minister, Howard Carter, the Logos Foundation was based in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, where it conducted seminars and conventions and a publications program.[333] At the end of 1987 Logos moved its headquarters to Toowoomba in Queensland. Upon moving to Queensland, the Foundation's major political initiatives were to argue strenuously against the amendments to the Federal Constitution in September 1988; to support the concept of Citizen Initiated Referenda (which it terms Voters' Veto); and to mount a campaign during the 1989 Queensland state election arguing that the key issues in the election were "the values of the candidates not their personalities." [334] In the Logos lexicon such values were defined by the attitudes of the candidates on the issues of pornography, homosexuality, abortion and capital punishment. The irony of being anti-

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[333] Chant, *Heart* 232.
[334] SM 22.10.1989.

abortion and pro-capital punishment was not apparent to the Foundation.

The Logos Foundation has defined itself as,

> ...a Christian organization committed to the maintenance of the historic Judaeo-Christian values as the basis for individual, family, ecclesial, economic and civil spheres. These values are the foundation for an integrated and free society. The message of Logos is the Gospel of the Kingdom of God: the Good News that there is total redemption for mankind and total victory for God's people under the moral government of God. In this, Logos subscribes to the historic position of orthodox biblical Christianity.[35]

In reality, the Logos Foundation is both a religious and a political organization. It has two arms. These are the Covenant Evangelical Churches, which it sponsors, and the Foundation itself. According to Derek Brown, the national co-ordinator of the Logos Foundation, there are only three Covenant Evangelical Churches in Australia: in Toowoomba, Dubbo (NSW) and Perth. The largest congregation, Toowoomba, has some 800 members.[36] Logos also sent out members - after a month's training at the Foundation's Bible School - into local communities, mostly country towns. They are not, Brown emphasized, sent out to start churches.They participate in the life of local churches where they live. This leaves open the

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[35] Logos Foundation 1987 Convention brochure.
[36] J.Harrison, "Logos: the word is out," *Journey* (Dec 1989): 36.

question as to whether such people are political activists.

Carter described the relationship between the Covenant Evangelical Church and the Foundation saying,

> Logos Foundation has been undergirded practically, spiritually and logistically by a large body of committed Christians who belong to various churches around Australia functioning...as Covenant Evangelical Churches. The Churches are there to serve Logos and its vision for the nation - not ... the reverse.[37]

While domiciled in the Blue Mountains, Logos campaigned against the Bill of Rights and the ID card, and somewhat immodestly claimed credit for the failure of these two proposals with a reference in their literature to, "the victories that resulted from the Logos campaigns over the Bill of Rights and the I.D.Card (sic) issues..." [38] Logos claimed to be apolitical and non-partisan; but Fabian Socialism is another frequent and long term target of the Foundation. However, in an interview Brown was unable to distinguish between Marxian Socialism, Fabianism Socialism and Christian Socialism.[39]

The Foundation is alleged to have links with the League of Rights [40] and an American movement called the

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[37] Logos Foundation, "An open letter from Howard Carter," September 1987.
[38] Logos Foundation letter to supporters from Darryl Paine, July 1988.
[39] Harrison, "Logos" 38.
[40] *CM* 9.4.1988.

Christian Reconstructionists. Carter has said, however,"we resist strongly the connotation that we are a right-wing fundamentalist sect. We are not sinister as some people think..."[41]

The Logos Foundation's link with the American Reconstructionists is though the philosopher and theologian R.J.Rushdoony, best-known for his strong influence on the conservative Christian apologist Francis Schaeffer. Rushdoony heads the Chalcedon Foundation based at Vallecito, California, described by *Newsweek* magazine as the think tank of the Religious Right.[42] One of Rushdoony's primary concerns is the intrusion of the state into education [43] and he was a guest speaker on the issues of educational freedom at a Logos seminar in 1986. Foundation leaders tried to play down the association between Logos and Rushdoony. In a radio interview in November 1989, Derek Brown stated that Howard Carter and Rushdoony shared a platform in 1986, implying that was the extent of the contact. When pressed further on the Rushdoony association, Brown acknowledged that Logos has brought Rushdoony to Australia.[44] If, as Brown has asserted, the Logos Foundation does not adhere

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[41] *CM* 9.4.1988.
[42] Rodney Clapp, "Democracy as heresy," *Christianity Today*, (20.2.1987): 17
[43] Clapp 20.
[44] Harrison, "Logos" 38.

to Reconstructionism, then why the shyness about the association with Rushdoony?

Rushdoony's Christian Reconstructionism was the subject of a substantial critical analysis by Rodney Clapp in the conservative evangelical news-magazine *Christianity Today* in February 1987 under the heading, "Democracy as Heresy". Clapp wrote that Reconstructionism appealed to " independent Baptist churches ...and small denominations with fundamentalist and Reformed roots," as well as among "some 20 million charismatics world wide" [45], a description which fits Logos well. Without any apparent sense of contradiction, Carter has described Logos' Covenant Evangelical Churches as,"reformed in theology, baptistic in relation to the nature of the church, evangelical in relation to the gospel, and charismatic in expression."[46] Rushdoony, who holds to a post-millennial position on eschatology,[47] served as a contributing editor for the now defunct American charismatic magazine *New Wine*. [48] In fact, *New Wine* magazine was another link between Rushdoony and Logos. The Logos magazine *Restore*, which like *New Wine* is also defunct, re-published a considerable number of articles

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[45] Clapp 20-21.
[46] Logos Foundation, "Open Letter."
[47] Clapp 19.
[48] Clapp 21.

from *New Wine*.[49] The Presbyterian Church of America issued a statement on Reconstructionism in 1978, and while it did not declare it heretical, certainly did not endorse it.[50]

American critics of Reconstructionism has drawn attention to the movement's desire to re-establish the law of the Old Testament, with some concessions to New Testament practices. According to Rodney Clapp:

> In the Reconstructed society, there will be no federal government. Nor will there be a democracy, which Reconstructionists regard as a "heresy". Rushdoony is opposed to pluralism since, "in the name of toleration, the believer is asked to associate on a common level of total acceptance with the atheist, the pervert, the criminal and the adherents of other religions"... True to the letter of Old Testament Law, homosexuals, incorrigible children, adulterers, blasphemers, astrologers, and others will be executed.[51]

However, the Reconstructionists are not completely consistent. For example, Clapp notes that they are not polygamists.[52]

Perhaps the most significant litmus test of Reconstructionist influence is the issue of capital punishment. Like the Reconstructionists they profess not to belong to, the Logos Foundation has argued for capital

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[49] Neville Buch, "No link, Mr Carter? Logos Foundation and Christian Reconstructionism," unpublished paper (1989): 1.
[50] Clapp 21.
[51] Clapp 19.
[52] Clapp 19.

punishment. Apart from the incongruity of also arguing for the sanctity of life in its stand against abortion, Logos says: "Jesus' words on loving one's enemies, turning the other cheek and walking the second mile were not intended to change the nature of justice in society."[53] Yet the Logos Foundation still claims to uphold biblical inerrancy!

Working through Carter's description of the Covenant Evangelical Church as reformed, baptistic, charismatic and evangelical, Derek Brown contended that the Foundation accepted the principles of the Reformation; the sovereignty of God, the falleness of man [his term], salvation through Christ, and the inerrancy of the Bible.[54] Brown was unaware that scriptural inerrancy was not at issue during the Reformation. However, it is the Foundation's position on biblical inerrancy that classifies them as fundamentalist.

Brown said the Foundation also rejects the Calvinist notion of theocracy, which underpins Reconstructionism. In rejecting theocracy, Brown posits that the church and the civil government are separate spheres of life. "As a world-view, it [Christianity] sees creation divided into several spheres, each of which has its own terms of

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[53] Derek Brown, "Is capital punishment Christian?" *Logos Journal* (Jan/Feb 1989): 19.
[54] Harrison "Logos" 38.

reference and responsibility."[55] While this sounds like the classical Lutheran position on church and state, it is in fact drawn from one of the god-fathers of Reconstructionism, Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), the Dutch theologian and politician who sought to develop a schematic framework for understanding reality based on the ideas of John Calvin.

These then are the ideological foundations upon which Logos built its political campaigns. The Voter's Veto campaign - the name given by Logos to its promotion of Citizen Initiated Referenda - was supported by the League of Rights, the Council for a Free Australia, the Australian Federation for Decency and the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) schools movement.[56]

Why did the Logos Foundation choose Queensland for its operations? One reason given was the Foundation's dispute with the NSW over the curriculum to be taught in the Foundation school.[57] There was also some financial incentive for the group to move. The organization has suffered some financial losses with the failure of an offshore investment. Carter was clearly reluctant to acknowledge this saying,

> One of the problems faced in publishing details of our circumstances and experiences is that reporting information often raises other issues

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[55] Brown 18.]
[56] *Australian* 26.7.1987 and *CM* 9.4.1988.
[57] *Australian* 7.8.1990.

> or leaves other questions unanswered. Such is the case with our finances. In 1986...we mentioned the loss of capital through failure of an investment overseas. We did not feel further explanation was necessary."[58]

Apparently further explanation was necessary, and Carter sent out a four page Open Letter to all Logos supporters explaining in further detail the organization's finances and his reasons for the move to Toowoomba.

At the time that Logos decided to move to Queensland the New Right was in the ascendent.[59] Senator John Stone and the H.R.Nicholls Society, John and Andrew Hay, John Leard, John Hyde, the Institute for Public Affairs and other New Right figures and organizations were all in the public eye, and of course Bjelke-Petersen himself was involved in the national crusade that would eventually become the "Joh for PM" campaign. The coalition split that cost John Howard his chance of becoming Prime minister was yet to come. The *Logos Journal* interview with Bjelke-Petersen in June 1987 was a signal to all Logos supporters to back the Joh for PM campaign.[60] However, by the time the article appeared the crusade was all over. Nonetheless, the move to Toowoomba would have provided the Logos Foundation with a more fertile soil in which to plant its mixture of conservative religion and

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[58] Logos Foundation, "Open Letter."
[59] Peter Coaldrake, Political Chronicle, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 33.2, (1987): 110.
[60] Carter and Sheldon 12.

conservative politics. Furthermore both the Darling Downs to the west of Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley to the east are identified areas of the influence of the League of Rights.[61]

Within the year of its move to Toowoomba, Logos had further battles to fight. The most significant was the constitutional referenda in September 1988 in which the Foundation opposed the fourth question on freedom of religion. On this occasion Carter raised to Federal Constitution to quasi-canonical status, writing in an undated letter to supporters: "The Constitution ...is a document protecting the states! It proclaims decentralization and shared power. Church, this is Christian teaching!" Carter was also critical of the silence of what he called the "official" churches on the referendum.[62] The irony of the Logos criticism of the churches in its campaign against the referendum proposals is that Logos was selective in the issues it has chosen to campaign on. Corruption, the electoral malapportionment, administrative reform, especially in the areas of police, prisons and the judiciary did not appear on the Logos agenda.

After the demise of Bjelke-Petersen, there were signs that the Logos Foundation and its fellow travellers on

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[61] Campbell 182, 184, and *CM* 12.3.1988; 18.3.1988; 26.1.1989.
[62] Logos Foundation, "The Howard Carter Letter," 1988.

the far right were in disfavour with the Queensland National Party. In March 1989 when Logos opposed amendments to the Queensland Education Act which provided for the registration of all non-government schools and which were supported by all political parties, they were rebuked by the National Party Education minister Brian Littleproud. Littleproud, a former teacher, represented the Darling Downs seat of Condamine in the Queensland Parliament.[63]

The Logos Foundation's entry into the 1989 Queensland state election campaign described above, also drew a sharp response from Uniting Church Moderator Don Whebell, Anglican Archbishop Sir John Grindrod, Lutheran Church president Pastor Paul Renner and Baptist Union head, Pastor Fred Stallard; a degree of ecumenical unanimity on public issues not seen for ten years in Queensland.

The church leaders were critical of the advertisements, which, they said represented, "a single viewpoint, project a very particular aspect of the political agenda and adopt a questionable approach to political campaigning."[64] However, Carter was able to muster some 300 Queensland clergy in support of his election campaign, among them Anglican, Baptist, Roman Catholic,

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[63] *CM* 29.3.1989.
[64] Heads of Churches Press Release, "Logos Doesn't Speak For The Whole Church." (5 November 1989).

Lutheran clergy and Salvation Army officers.[65] Major Bram Hindle, commander of the Salvation Army's central and northern territory, Dr David Cartledge, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God and Pastor Max Taylor, senior pastor of the Christian Outreach Centre, were among the signatories to the Logos sponsored statement. These signatures are a measure not only of the political naivete of so many clergy in allowing a recently arrived religio-political lobby group to manipulate them, but more importantly of the significant hold that pietism has retained on the religious culture of Queensland. Will that hold remain relatively unaffected by the opprobrium attaching to the Logos Foundation in the wake of Carter's resignation in August 1990 after confessing to have committed adultery?[66]

There is no evidence to suggest that Bjelke-Petersen was greatly influenced by the Logos Foundation or Christian Reconstructionism. Trying to bring about their own Reconstruction, the Logos Foundation were religious carpetbaggers who sought to capitalize on the political environment Bjelke-Petersen had created, and on the religious culture of Queensland, in which the old evangelical pietism was overlain with neo-pietist influences. It was no accident that they chose a location - Toowoomba - where the amalgam of the old pietism and

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[65] *CM* 29.11.1989.
[66] *CM* 9.8.1990.

the new was strong. The influence of this pietism, old and new, in the political culture of Queensland was strengthened by the public persona of Bjelke-Petersen, particularly by the populist and messianic expressions of that persona. Indeed, it is the projection of this persona against the backdrop of pietism that made possible the progression from pietism, through neo-pietism, to 'Protestant civic piety' in Queensland. And Protestant civic piety is a form of civil religion.

CHAPTER 19
POPULISM AND MESSIANISM IN BJELKE-PETERSEN'S POLITICAL CAREER

> There's no Messiah concept about Joh. I find him extremely humble, soft and compassionate. It surprises me the enormous efforts he makes to be at worship. You don't understand the person of Joh without understanding his Christian faith. It's extremely deep.
>
> Pastor Ken Schmidt,
> Kingaroy Lutheran Church. [1]

> Well he has this mission, and you know what he's like when he makes up his mind. . .
>
> Senator Lady Flo Bjelke-Petersen,
> four days later.[2]

> I am regarded as the messiah of conservative politics.
>
> John Howard, then Federal Opposition Leader,
> six days later.[3]

> Joh, I believe, is like Moses, leading the people out of the wilderness.
>
> Ben Lexen at Albury,
> eleven days later.[4]

> Born leaders seem to fear only more consciously what in some form everybody fears in the depths of his inner life, and they convincingly claim to have an answer.
>
> E.H.Erikson *Young Man Luther.* [5]

I.

When Joh Bjelke-Petersen became a Country Party parliamentary candidate, the party was less than thirty years old. Having only tasted office briefly in

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[1] *CM* 31.3.1987.
[2] *CM* 3.4.1987.
[3] *Time Australia* 9.3.1987.
[4] ABC-TV News 21.3.1987.
[5] Erik Erikson, *Young man Luther. A study in psychoanalysis and history* (London: Faber, 1958) 105.

Queensland from 1929 to 1932, and having faced down the Social Credit challenge in thirties, the party still remembered the agrarian populism of its adolescence. Populism has been defined as

> ... a style of leadership which reflects the interests and attitudes of the common people, especially small farmers. It will usually represent very conservative, anti-metropolitan and even anti-intellectual values.[6]

Under this definition, Bjelke-Petersen could well be regarded as a populist; and political commentators Margaret Cribb and Paul Reynolds have defined him so.[7] Moreover, Mullins regards populism as an integral part of the political culture of Queensland; an inheritance from the the years of Labor hegemony.[8] There is also a view that Bjelke-Petersen was both a populist and a corporatist. One who approached such a view was political commentator Maximilian Walsh. In the wake of the 1983 Queensland state election, Walsh wrote:

> It is common to hear and see Bjelke-Petersen as a populist conservative suggesting by this oxymoron that he stands for old-fashioned or traditional social values but at the same time is paternalistic

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[6] P.J.Boyce, R.K.Forward, M.N.B.Cribb, K.W.Wiltshire, D.E.Drinkwater, *Dictionary of Australian politics* (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1980.)

[7] M.B.Cribb, "Queensland," in Costar and Woodward 79 and Paul Reynolds, "Queensland politics: the rise and rise of populism," *Social Alternatives* 5.3 (1986) 51-52.

[8] Mullins in Head 139. Mullins offers the rather contrived argument that Queensland has been visited by both a 'left' populism and a 'right' populism. While his argument contains no mention of corporatism, he suggests that "right populism involves all classes: capitalists, the petty bourgeoisie, and the working class..." 153.

> in his approach to economic management. This is a fair summary of much of what Joh is about.[9]

In support of this conception of Bjelke-Petersen as both corporatist and populist, it is interesting to observe that during the Joh for PM campaign economics commentator Ross Gittins was analyzing Bjelke-Petersen's policies in terms of populism, at the same time as political commentator Quentin Dempster was defining Bjelke-Petersen's policies as corporatist.[10]It may be that once again we are confronted with the type of paradox outlined at the beginning of this study, and that Bjelke-Petersen was both a populist and a corporatist. However, it is proposed to argue here that what has been understood as populism in Bjelke-Petersen's political style, is in fact better described as 'messianism'. This is not to argue that Bjelke-Petersen's messianism did not begin as populism, for it is conceivable that messianism is simply a more highly defined form of populism.

What evidence is there in support of the argument that Bjelke-Petersen's political style was messianic? First, Bjelke-Petersen always expressed a strong sense of divine guidance:

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[9] Maximilian Walsh, "A Vote for big business, populism and, of course, Joh," *Bulletin* 1.11.1983.
[10] Ross Gittins, "The truth behind Sir Joh's populist outpourings," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4.3.1987 and Quentin Dempster, "Waiting for benefits from corporate state," *SM*, 1.2.1987.

> If I didn't believe in God's guidance, the opening and closing of doors... I would never undertake the things I seek to undertake.[11]

Beyond a reliance on divine guidance, Bjelke-Petersen had a strongly developed sense of mission. As Florence Bjelke-Petersen expressed it during the Joh for PM campaign, "Well he has this mission, and you know what he's like when he makes up his mind. . ."[12] Joh Bjelke-Petersen's cousin, Les Hoey observed that,

> While he believes he has kept his religion out of politics, he has in fact given his political activity the appearance of a religious crusade.[13]

That sense of mission extends to a belief that he is - in all humility - a specially chosen instrument of the will of God:

> I'm a great believer in the opening and closing of doors as a Christian. If the way opens up, I feel that one can move forward with confidence, recognizing God's will and plan. God can and does care for us and does guide us and does help us. Not that we deserve it. . . but because we know we are very poor miserable sinners and need God's forgiveness every day.[14]

Concomitantly, Bjelke-Petersen believes that God preserves from danger and delivers from peril those who are his specially chosen instruments, be their troubles personal[15] or political:

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[11] Carter and Sheldon 12.
[12] *CM* 3.4.1987.
[13] Hoey 12.
[14] *New Life* 24.10.1985.
[15] *CM* 6.9.1985.

> Our last [1986] election in Queensland, I believe was an answer to prayer. Everything indicated that there was no way I could win... Now a lot of people say we won because we had a heavy advertising campaign in the last week. That's true; we did, because the polls showed there were a lot of people who were uncommitted. On the other hand, I believe God moved upon hearts to achieve what we achieved.[16]

Secondly, Bjelke-Petersen was deeply imbued with a concept of leadership that drew heavily upon the figures of the Old Testament, one of the primary sources of the notion of messianism. In a 1987 interview he mentioned the deeds of Elijah, Abraham, David, Moses, Caleb, Gideon as "fascinating stories stories of faith that I've always been interested in, all my life."[17] Bjelke-Petersen was especially impressed by Joshua, who led the people of Israel to the Promised Land. However, the way Bjelke-Petersen tells it, the story of Joshua has all the characteristics of a case study in possibility thinking:

> Joshua must have had enormous faith. Joshua believed that it was possible for the walls of Jericho to fall down. I've read Joshua many time times over the years and have been very impressed with the almost unbelievable feats he achieved when everything seems impossible.[18]

So not for Bjelke-Petersen a Christological model of leadership, but a more strident leadership based on the Old Testament. For the Christological model of leadership, when finally revealed, ran counter to many of

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[16] Carter and Sheldon 15.
[17] Carter and Sheldon 12.
[18] Carter and Sheldon 15.

the expectations built up over the preceding centuries; expectations based on the Old Testament tradition. Les Hoey perhaps misses the point with his observation that,

> Joh appears to see himself as a latter-day Old Testament prophet who has been called upon to cleanse away the evil of leftists politics from society, so that the righteousness may prevail.[19]

For Bjelke-Petersen appears unfamiliar with the later Old Testament tradition of prophetic witness against the abuses of power by the monarchy, the tradition of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos and Micah; a tradition drawn upon by some of Bjelke-Petersen's ecclesiastical critics during the nineteen seventies.

Thirdly, despite the strong influences of his mother, Maren, on the development of Bjelke-Petersen's personality, the Bjelke-Petersen family home was a patriarchy. Though unfit for the rigours of pioneer farming, Carl Bjelke-Petersen still made all the key decisions, especially the economic decisions.[20] According to Hoey, "Joh has taken the mantle of authority worn by his father until Joh was well into his forties."[21] Bjelke-Petersen himself adopted a *modus operandi* based on patriarchy whether it be toward Aboriginal people,[22] or economic development. Walsh's description of Bjelke-Petersen as "paternalistic in his

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[19] Hoey 13.
[20] J.Bjelke-Petersen, *Memoirs* 27, 11; Hoey 11.
[21] Hoey 12.
[22] *Telegraph* 12.6.1981.

approach to economic management" is correct; such paternalism being integrated into Bjelke-Petersen's corporatist approach to economic development. So, with a well-developed sense of mission and an understanding of leadership drawn from both the Old Testament and the patriarchy of his family, how did Bjelke-Petersen's messianic self understanding unfold during his political career?

II.

When Bjelke-Petersen was elected parliamentary leader of the Queensland Country Party in 1968, no messianic rhetoric accompanied his ascension to the state's highest elective office. Bjelke-Petersen had achieved his early political victories in the South Burnett by ensuring he had sufficient numbers to make a successful challenge. The importance of having the numbers was no doubt a lesson he learned early after failing to defeat sitting Country Party incumbent J.B.Edwards in a wartime pre-selection battle in 1944. It was having the numbers the enabled him to fend off a backbench challenge to his leadership of the Parliamentary in 1970. The backbenchers were dissatisfied with Bjelke-Petersen's public image. His personal values - his Christian values - and the way he expressed them, portrayed him as a wowser.[23] Even worse in the litany of political sins, he was regarded as

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[23] Lunn, *Joh* 71.

a poor communicator at a time when television was becoming so influential in forming public perceptions of politics. After an all night session on the telephone rallying support, gathering proxies and bringing to bear the influence of party president Robert Sparkes, Bjelke-Petersen survived and began to work on his image. Lunn's account of this event suggests that Bjelke-Petersen did not possess one of the proxies he used in his own favour and, "reasoning that no one had been able to contact Neville Hewitt, produced his proxy."[24] While Lunn implied that Bjelke-Petersen acted improperly to retain power, Florence Bjelke-Petersen saw the same sequence of events as part of an unfolding divine plan; a view which it must be added is quintessentially pietistic. As Florence Bjelke-Petersen reflected seven years later:

> The Lord leads and guides in wonderful ways... They were going to put him out after two years. But someone told him so he could organize his forces, and I think he probably reinforced his position. This was God's work.[25]

Perhaps also conscious of the pietist aphorism that God helps those who help themselves, Joh Bjelke-Petersen then employed ABC political journalist Allen Callaghan as press secretary and set about mastering the media. It took more than a mastery of the media to transform Bjelke-Petersen from a man regarded as a bumpkin and a

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[24] Lunn, *Joh* 84. Bjelke-Petersen offered his own version of this event in Memoirs 95-96, and writes that he did not need to use Hewitt's proxy.
[25] *Bulletin* 1.10.1977.

wowser to a man claimed by his supporters in 1987 to be the saviour of Australia. The advent of the Whitlam Labor government in Canberra in 1972, and the move by the Country Party to change its name to the National Party to enable it to expand from its diminishing rural support base, were the two key events which projected Bjelke-Petersen to a position of dominance in conservative politics in the nineteen eighties.

The fast pace of social change instituted by the Whitlam Government after twenty-three years of conservative rule, allowed Bjelke-Petersen to pose as the champion of traditional values - both religious and political, with the distinction rarely, if ever being made between the two.

Thus, at this time that newspaper headlines start using biblical imagery in describing Bjelke-Petersen's polemics and policies. A Melbourne *Age* feature on Queensland in April 1972, was headlined, "Land Of Thou Shalt Nots," and in the *Courier-Mail*, Alan Underwood wrote a feature in November 1974 entitled, "Joh versus the Feds: man with a missionary zeal."[26] Bjelke-Petersen's victory over the state Labor Party in the 1974 election, and his role in the dismissal of the Whitlam government in 1975 mark the end of the first stage of personality politics for Bjelke-Petersen.

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[26] *Age* 3.3.1972 and *CM* 18.11.1974.

By the 1977 state election the National Party was using the theme of "Joh's the Man". The campaign jingle ran:

> Joh's the man to keep us strong,
> He's the man who won't let our state go wrong.
> Joh's the man standing up,
> Standing up for you and me,
> He's the man we need.[27]

This marked the beginning of a focus by the National Party on personality politics. By the 1986 state election, Bjelke-Petersen was still a mere mortal as far as the official National Party campaign was concerned, but barely. At a National Party campaign rally in Townsville, a country and western singing coalminer from BHP's Norwich Park mine sang a little ditty, with a messianic theme. The song began,

> He's the Premier of our sunny state,
> He's a leader of the times,
> It's he who controls the destiny of your future and of mine
> And he may not walk on water but at times I think he can. . .
> Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen . . .

The key refrain was:

> If you should enter politics here's a tip that you should know;
> What you cannot learn from Jesus, just make a call to Joh.

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[27] Lunn *Joh* 267.

> If you should have a problem,
> Or there's something you should know,
> If God is unavailable,
> Just make a call to Joh.

Another verse linked leadership and material prosperity:

> When it comes to running Queensland
> Its Sir Joh who holds the reins
> And he may not part the waters
> Like another leader did
> While Joh is still in power
> We're all bound to make a quid.[28]

The National Party was reported to be receiving a 50 cent royalty on each copy of the record sold.[29] Bjelke-Petersen, sensing the damage such a song could do, dissociated himself from it saying, "I am just an ordinary sinner like anyone else. There is no such person in that category."[30] Part of the National Party constituency in urban Townsville was to be found in the city's independent and mainline neo-pentecostal churches, the only place outside the southeast Queensland bible belt where neo-pentecostalism had any significant political influence. In such circles the song could be regarded as blasphemous.

Certainly in Mackay, five Uniting Church ministers thought so. In a public statement they said:

> We are concerned about any attempts to portray a political figure as a sort of demi-god. The

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[28] *CM* 15.10.1986.
[29] *CM* 15.10.1986.
[30] *CM* 15.10.1986.

> adulation that this leads to is not good for the political or spiritual health of the community.
>
> It tends to render the political figure immune from criticism and no longer accountable for his actions. History shows that this is often the first step in a progressive slide into tyranny. Worst of all, it means that society is flirting with what is most offensive to God - idolatry.[31]

The National Party supporters defended their party and their leader, and attacked the signatories to the statement, one of whom was Denis Conomos.[32] Jean Muntz, a member of the Uniting Church in Mackay, and wife of the Member for Whitsunday Geoff Muntz, a minister in the Bjelke-Petersen cabinet, wrote, "there is nothing further from the truth that the party portrays a political leader as a sort of demi-God."[33] In an echo which resonated more loudly during the "Joh for PM" campaign the following year, Muntz concluded, "We need Christian political leaders and they need our support," demonstrating that the party had a stronger hold than the pew.[34]

Bjelke-Petersen's next electoral battle ground was the Northern Territory, an election which was a precursor to the Bjelke-Petersen campaign for Canberra. In that campaign the messianic overtones were present again. Journalist Alan Ramsay reported this verbatim

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[31] Mackay *Daily Mercury* 25.10.1986.
[32] See Chapter 12 for more about Conomos' relationship with the Bjelke-Petersen Government.
[33] Mackay *Daily Mercury* 28.10.1986.
[34] Mackay *Daily Mercury* 28.10.1986.

conversation in National Party advertising guru Arthur Hankin's studio control room while a commercial for the Territory election was being edited:

> No don't use the one of him [Bjelke-Petersen] on the podium with his hand in the air, it looks too Hitlerish. . . What I want to show is the friendly father/leader figure, the grandfather, the good guy, the bloke that God has smiled upon.[35]

The messianic dimension to Joh's campaign was recognized by his opponents. After the newly-fledged, Bjelke-Petersen-backed Territory National Party gained only 17% of the vote, the electoral victor, Country-Liberal Party Chief Minister Hatton spoke of, "a vote against the messianic nonsense which has emanated from Bjelke-Petersen over the past few months."[36]

III.

What Hatton disparaged as messianic nonsense was destined to continue to reach greater heights, but it carried within the seeds of its own destruction. The Joh for PM campaign in 1987 marked the high point of Bjelke-Petersen's messianic pretensions, carrying with it such accoutrements as a yellow sweat shirt with the slogan, "ON THE EIGHTH DAY, JOH CREATED QUEENSLAND." Deputy Premier W.A.M.Gunn and Industrial Affairs Minister Vince Lester modelled the garment for the television cameras in February 1987. Such a campaign should have been no

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[35] *Time Australia* 9.3.1987.
[36] *Australian* 19.4.1987.

surprise to the Queensland electorate. In December 1985 the Brisbane *Sunday Mail* carried a front page lead story headlined, "Joh on a 'national crusade'."[37] The story detailed much of the campaign which was still yet more than a full year away. The use of language with religious connotations gives insight into the character and ideology of those involved, particularly the main protagonist.

Bjelke-Petersen clearly believed his Canberra campaign was in response to a divine call, as this report of a National Party meeting in Kingaroy attended by 300 of the party faithful makes clear:

> Asked if God had selected him for the job, Sir Joh replied: "That's a very nice question. But I don't want to say what will be taken as something special.
>
> You can't say God is on our side. It is a matter of whether we are on His side and do the things He expects and demands of us..."[38]

Bjelke-Petersen's coyness about stating his sense of call openly is obvious, but he nonetheless regarded the campaign and his role in is as part of what God "expects and demands."

There was public enthusiasm for the campaign. "I love what he stands for - a Christian, capitalistic National,"

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[37] *SM* 15.12.1985.
[38] *CM* 16.2.1987.

one supporter said.[39] Another was more sober, through still supportive:

> I resent the malignant slurs cast at Sir Joh by your correspondents... It reminds me of Jesus Christ - how he suffered and finally the supreme sacrifice of crucifixion before he was believed. Come on Sir Joh, go for it and my blessing goes with you to Canberra.[40]

Others were less sure. One asked:

> Is Sir Joh a saint, a saviour of the game, or simply a streaker? The crowd in the outer is not sure yet - we are too easily diverted when the wicket gets sticky...[41]

Two hundred businessmen attended a breakfast at Brisbane's Park Royal Hotel organized by the Christian Outreach Centre in support of "godly men in parliament." Bjelke-Petersen addressed them, castigating the fifty or so members of Federal Parliament who refused to take the oath on the Bible.[42]

References by political observers to the messianic character of the campaign abound. Former Federal National Party leader Doug Anthony referred to the "divine inspiration" motivating the Queensland National Party push for Canberra.[43] Journalist Adrian McGregor wrote that, "Maybe Australia hopes Sir Joh can resurrect the Australian economy as Jesus did Lazarus".[44] *The*

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[39] *CM* 19.2 1987.
[40] *CM* 20.2.1987.
[41] *CM* 20.2.1987.
[42] *SM* 3.4.1987.
[43] *CM* 3.3.1987.
[44] *CM* 20.2.1987.

Australian's political writer Paul Kelly described Bjelke-Petersen as a "God-driven unguided missile,"[45] and Phillip Adams offered the acerbic observation that,

> Blind Freddie can see that their emperor [has] not really donned ... the mantle of Menzies or ... the the shoes of the Fisherman, but is stark bollockers.[46]

A *Courier-Mail* editorial attempted to address what it regarded as the more serious issues behind the Bjelke-Petersen's messianism. Headed, "Is the mission slowing down?" the editorial commented:

> For all his policy vagueness, his deliberate non-answers and his manipulation of the political agenda, Sir Joh's challenge is more than the mission of a self-appointed Messiah.[48]

Yet the style was the substance; in Marshall McLuhan's aphorism-turned-cliche, the medium was the message. The policy vagueness was deliberate. Although taxation reform was the most prominent issue taken up by Bjelke-Petersen, what was mere economic policy when the salvation of the nation was the real issue? Bjelke-Petersen described his mission as,

> ... something that is so important for Australia, for my children and the future of my grandchildren, that I have to do it.[49]

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[45] *Australian* 19.2.1987.
[46] *Sunday Sun* 22.3.1987.
[48] *CM* 14.4.1987. Another editorial, "This dream is dashed," referred to "this extraordinary display of individual ambition, this almost-Messianic belief of Sir Joh in his ability to save the nation..." *CM* 28.3.1987.
[49] *CM* 9.2.1987.

When the Canberra campaign finally failed, its demise too was seen as part of the divine plan. Florence Bjelke-Petersen reported her husband as saying: "If God shuts the door Florence, well then I won't go."[50] That the campaign failed, in the eyes of the political commentators, for a range of other reasons,[51] seemed of small consequence.

IV.

What explains Bjelke-Petersen's messianic appeal in Queensland? In his study of Luther, Erik Erikson concluded that:

> Born leaders seem to fear only more consciously what in some form everybody fears in the depths of his inner life, and they convincingly claim to have an answer.[52]

Sociologist Max Weber in his studies of charismatic leadership defined charisma as a,

> certain quality of an individual's personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities.[53]

But according to Weber, the quality is conferred or confirmed by the charismatic leader's followers:

> ...it is the recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the

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[50] *CM* 6.6.1987.
[51] *CM* 14.4.1987.
[52] Erikson 105.
[53] Max Weber, *On charisma & institution building*, ed., S.N.Eisenstadt (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1968) 48.

> validity of charisma. This is freely given and guaranteed by what is held to be a 'sign' or proof, originally always a miracle, and consists in devotion to the corresponding revelation, hero worship or absolute trust in the leader.[54]

Teasing out Weber's work in a study dealing with the origins of charismatic leadership, Douglas F. Barnes argued that charismatic leaders typically arise in "a period of radical social change which causes distress and dissatisfaction among a segment of the population."[55] He continued,

> Charismatic leaders. . . face the threat of chaos which is disruptive . . . and resolve this confrontation by formulating their own answers to the problem of the meaning of life.[56]

The most significant point about the above discussion of charismatic leadership is that both Weber and Barnes are writing about charismatic religious leadership, but the parallels with politics are certainly pertinent.

From the perspective of his party and his followers, some of the 'miracles' that Bjelke-Petersen performed included: a tough law and order campaign during the Springbok rugby tour in 1971, during which he handsomely won several by-elections; his decimation of the parliamentary membership of the Labor Party in the 1974 state election; his role in the dismissal of the Whitlam

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[54] Weber 49.
[55] Douglas F.Barnes "Charisma and religious leadership: an historical analysis," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 17.1 (1978): 4.
[56] Barnes 4.

government leading to the 1975 federal election; the banning of dissidents from the streets from 1977; his breaking the power of allegedly militant trade unions, such as the Electrical Trades Union; and his twice leading the National Party to government in its own right without the Liberals in 1983 and 1986. It was the victory in 1986 that launched Bjelke-Petersen on his Canberra crusade in January 1987.

How then do the actions of Joh Bjelke-Petersen fit with the schema of charismatic religious leadership set down by Weber and his fellow sociologists? At the very least, "exceptional powers or qualities" can be attributed to Joh Bjelke-Petersen by his followers in consequence of the actions described above. Secondly, Bjelke-Petersen's time as Queensland Premier coincided with a time of radical social change: the closing of the curtain on twenty-three years of conservative rule in federal politics in 1972; the Vietnam War; the resurgent anti-nuclear movement; the anti-apartheid movement; increasing youth unemployment; the growth in organized crime and the drug trade. All these are symbolic of the tides of social change washing against the shores of Queensland in the late nineteen sixties and nineteen seventies which saw in reaction, the emergence of Bjelke-Petersen as a charismatic, even messianic figure.

Thirdly, drawing on a number of factors within the political culture of Queensland: the impact of distance; the assertion of regionalism; anti-urbanism; and an anti-intellectualism bred from low levels of educational attainment, Bjelke-Petersen portrayed a Queensland different from, even alienated from, the mainstream of Australian society. Such alienation forms the breeding ground for populism; a populism which Bjelke-Petersen elevated to messianism.

V.

As the Joh for Canberra campaign proceeded, disquieting allegations about police corruption in Queensland had been published in the *Courier-Mail* newspaper and on the ABC-TV program *4 Corners*. Bjelke-Petersen was distracted from the day to day politicking of Queensland by his Canberra campaign, so W.A.M.Gunn, the Deputy Premier and Police Minister and at that time Bjelke-Petersen's chosen heir-apparent, opted for a six week public inquiry into the allegations. The inquiry was to be headed by G.E.Fitzgerald QC.[57] Gunn acted to advance his position in the leadership succession stakes. Bjelke-Petersen rarely permitted inquiries into aspects of government administration, let alone public inquiries, but was

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[57] For more background to the Fitzgerald Inquiry see Phil Dickie, *The road to Fitzgerald and beyond* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1988) and Evan Whitton, *The hillbilly dictator* (Sydney: ABC Books, 1989).

forced by political necessity to concur with the actions of Gunn and Cabinet in his absence in the knowledge that the continuance of corruption allegations would also inhibit the Canberra campaign.

One of the factors which may have persuaded Gunn to opt for an inquiry was criticism from the Uniting Church over prostitution. Earlier in 1987, the Uniting Church had been critical of apparent government laxness in the policing of prostitution and had criticized Gunn for being "flippant" in his attitude to what the church regarded as a serious social problem.[58] Announcement of the Inquiry was welcomed by spokespersons for the Anglican and Uniting Churches.[59]

Fitzgerald's inquiry and subsequent report damned the notion of Bjelke-Petersen, his Government and its supporters, presiding over the moral high ground. Fitzgerald was commissioned in June 1987, and handed down his report two years later. By December 1987, Bjelke-Petersen was forced to resign as Premier of Queensland in the wake of revelations made before Fitzgerald. A year later, the former premier was compelled to appear before the Inquiry to explain his understanding of how the web of corruption had been spun. Like other members of his ministry - Hinze, Lane, Harvey, Gibbs, Austin and Muntz -

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[58] *DS* 15.1.1987.
[59] *CM* 21.5.1987.

Bjelke-Petersen was charged with criminal offences arising out of the Inquiry, an outcome eagerly but prematurely anticipated by journalist Phil Dickie in 1989.[60] The major issues addressed to Bjelke-Petersen by the Fitzgerald Inquiry were his contribution to the subversion of the principles and practices of the Westminster system of government,[61] his failure to recognize the influence of corruption,[62] and his failure to acknowledge the principle of conflict of interest.[63]

When he retired in 1987, Bjelke-Petersen summed up the objectives which had governed his political career as simply "to make Queensland a better place in which to live and to work."[64] A unstated corollary of that objective was that if the conventions of parliamentary democracy inhibited the objective, then they should be circumvented or ignored. For apart from the bad habits learned from the Hanlon and Gair Labor Governments, Bjelke-Petersen was unschooled in the Westminster tradition and had no *a priori* commitment to it. His own formal education left him ill-equipped to understand how parliamentary democracy worked. His political tutelage in the South Burnett under men such as Charles Adermann, Stan Marshall and Harry Hoggett - pious but pragmatic men

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[60] *CM* 6.10.1989.
[61] Fitzgerald, *Report* 123-128.
[62] *CM* 2.12.1988.
[63] Fitzgerald, *Report* 91-96.
[64] *Australian* 2.12.1987.

not given to much reflection on principles - was directed towards the art of politics, rather than the art of government.[65] This commitment to what he saw as higher objectives partly explains Bjelke-Petersen's attitude to the Westminster system. In such a milieu - in which the Executive dominated a unicameral Parliament, the official Opposition was weak and incompetent and the judiciary supine - the only checks and balances lay in extra-parliamentary opposition, and in the integrity of those in power. Which brings us to the subsidiary matters addressed to Bjelke-Petersen by the Fitzgerald Inquiry: conflict of interest and corruption.

Throughout his premiership, Bjelke-Petersen was regularly the subject of allegations of conflict of interest, from the Comalco share imbroglio in 1970[66] to Fitzgerald's examination of infrastructure improvements at the Bjelke-Petersen family property in Central Queensland - the Ten Mile.[67] Bjelke-Petersen's standard defence against allegations of conflict of interest was two pronged. He argued that he and his ministers were 'men of integrity' and the the electorate's confidence in that integrity was evidenced by successive electoral victories. In an

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[65] These three Country Party stalwarts were also leading laymen in Kingaroy. Adermann in the Church of Christ; Marshall was Session Clerk of the Presbyterian Church and Harry Hoggett was a Church of England churchwarden. See Section 2.
[66] *Bulletin* 6.4.1974.
[67] Fitzgerald, *Report* 91-96.

interview in the mid nineteen seventies Bjelke-Petersen told interviewer David Frost:

> We are men of integrity. We have been put there by the people year after year. The people know us...the people know me and trust me. We fought an election on it.[68]

However, the manner in which Bjelke-Petersen's rhetoric drew on the character of the political and religious culture of Queensland for his own ends, his skilled use of a largely uncritical mass media, and the above-mentioned incompetence of his parliamentary opponents, all meant that such intangibles as 'integrity' in government paled beside 'development' in the minds of the electorate.

Moreover, the adoption of "an unwritten code" of guidelines to avoid conflict of interest, which Bjelke-Petersen told Fitzgerald every minister knew and observed,[69] was not a practice that Bjelke-Petersen's predecessor and fellow evangelical pietist Francis Nicklin found expedient. Nicklin required all members of his Cabinet to "surrender all directorships and positions with co-operative societies and public bodies." [70]

Unlike Nicklin, Bjelke-Petersen gained from his evangelical pietism a self-perception that he, and by

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[68] Transcript of David Frost interview ABC-TV. Date unknown (ca 1974-76).
[69] Fitzgerald, *Report* 91.
[70] A.A.Morrison, "Political Chronicle," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 3.2 (May 1958) 239.

extension those around him, were above corrupt behaviour because of their righteousness. However, the humility and self-examination which Bjelke-Petersen claimed to be integral to his religious faith[71] did not alert him to his own hubris, nor to the human frailty in others which was - in terms of his world view referred to as 'sin' - the original source of corruption. It can only be surmised that the traditional evangelical pietism of which Bjelke-Petersen is representative had itself become the sort of lifeless orthopraxy, which parallelled the dogmatic orthodoxy against which pietism was originally a reaction.[72]

Bjelke-Petersen made a variety of responses to the Fitzgerald Inquiry and to Fitzgerald's *Report*. Towards the end of 1987, when the political cost of the Inquiry became obvious, Bjelke-Petersen appears to have attempted to circumscribe the Inquiry, if not close it down,[73] although in evidence before Commissioner Fitzgerald and in his memoirs Bjelke-Petersen claimed that he supported the Inquiry.[74] Later, Bjelke-Petersen denied that he could assist the Inquiry in any way, saying in February

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[71] *New Life* 24.10.1985; *CM* 15.10.1986.
[72] See Chapter 3 for the origins of evangelical pietism.
[73] Whitton 137 records that one of the reasons Gunn was included among the ministers to be sacked in November 1987, was so that Bjelke-Petersen could take over the Police portfolio, and thus ministerial responsibility for the portfolio with the intention of terminating the Inquiry.
[74] *Age* 2.12.1988 and J.Bjelke-Petersen *Memoirs* 235-6.

1988, "I can't imagine for a minute that there is anything I could help or assist the Inquiry with. I don't have any information."[75]

Prior to his own appearance before Fitzgerald, Bjelke-Petersen acknowledged that corrupt police had been "very naughty" but that he "had no suspicions at all."[76] After the inquiry findings were released, Bjelke-Petersen was reported to be "happily unrepentant ...saying he had nothing to confess."[77] He continued, blaming his own ignorance of corruption on Gunn and Lewis:

> Gunn and all the others always reported to cabinet that things were in control. It's easy to say Lewis should have known more, but the ministers should have known more.[78]

Bjelke-Petersen then proceeded to absolve himself of any responsibility:

> How could I have known after twenty years; no one could know it. It took Fitzgerald tens of millions of dollars and all the might and force he could, and it still took him quite a long time.[79]

However, evidence before the Inquiry showed that Bjelke-Petersen had been made aware of corruption in the police force in the late nineteen seventies and having been made aware, took no action and allowed the concern to "wither on the vine and it just faded out."[80]

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[75] *CM* 5.2.1988.
[76] *CM* 21.11.1988.
[77] *Australian* 5.7.1989.
[78] *Australian* 5.7.1989.
[79] *Australian* 5.7.1989.
[80] *Age* 2.12.1988.

Bjelke-Petersen's denial of responsibility, and his obvious lack of will in dealing with police corruption, is at odds not only with his oft demonstrated willingness to deal with what he perceived to be corrupting influences in other spheres of the state's life, such as education. It was also at odds with his self-proclaimed first principle of politics - to "provide strong positive leadership."[81] Moreover, given Bjelke-Petersen's professions of his own humility and sinfulness, and humanity's need for forgiveness, over many years in public life,[82] it would be consistent with such professions for Bjelke-Petersen to at least publicly acknowledge his sins of omission. No such acknowledgement was forthcoming, quick as Bjelke-Petersen had been to call for the moral reformation of other governments. In 1973, barely four months into the term of the Whitlam Labor Government, Bjelke-Petersen had commented, "I only pray the people of Australia wake up in time and make the Government reform its sinful, dangerous ways."[83]

The view that corruption was the isolated work of a few - the "one rotten apple in the barrel" theory of corruption - was comprehensively discredited by Fitzgerald in his critique of the police and administrative culture, which argued that the entire system needed to be rebuilt from

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[81] J.Bjelke-Petersen, *Memoirs* 175.
[82] *New Life* 24.10.1985; CM 15.10.1986.
[83] *Sun* 17.3.1973.

the beginning.[84] In his memoirs Bjelke-Petersen - who was unable to describe the separation of powers doctrine before Fitzgerald - questions Fitzgerald's competence in making recommendations on administrative and electoral reform.[85]

Finally, Bjelke-Petersen attacked Fitzgerald and his investigators *ad hominem*. Bjelke-Petersen said Fitzgerald was paid too much money,[86] and attacked the integrity of Fitzgerald investigator John Huey when giving evidence before the Pratt inquiry. When Huey was promoted to second in charge of the Brisbane CIB, Bjelke-Petersen went to the extent of contacting the then Premier Russell Cooper to argue against the appointment.[87]

VI.

Fitzgerald's public hearings appeared to make little difference to many among Bjelke-Petersen's traditional constituency. Following Bjelke-Petersen's appearance in the witness box in December 1988, Rona Joyner averred that, "he [Bjelke-Petersen] has not acted against corrupt police because he did not know they were corrupt."[88] In Kingaroy, Lutheran pastor Ken Schmidt spoke for pietism's rural heartland:

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[84] Fitzgerald, *Report* 4-7.
[85] J.Bjelke-Petersen, *Memoirs* 3.
[86] J.Bjelke-Petersen, *Memoirs* 2.
[87] *SM* 15.10.1989.
[88] *CM* 13.12.1988.

> I think the general perception here is that nothing has come out that has been cause for alarm. I do not think [Bjelke-Petersen's] week in the witness box proved him guilty of any negligence or crime. His positive influence over the state, its growth and the benefits that that came with that far outweigh anything else.[89]

The churches, who had been silent during Fitzgerald's Inquiry - partly out of a misguided understanding of *sub judice* - largely maintained their silence on the report itself. After release of the Fitzgerald Report there were statements from some church leaders supporting Fitzgerald and the reform process: Uniting Church moderator, Don Whebell, Anglican Bishop George Browning and the Anglican Bishop of Rockhampton George Hearn. Whebell commented that Christians should read the Fitzgerald Report with the Bible every day.[90] The next day, this remark was quoted by Bjelke-Petersen but mistakenly attributed by Bjelke-Petersen to Fitzgerald.[91] In 1989 the annual Uniting Church synod had a resolution before it on the Fitzgerald reform process. Whebell anticipated "heated debate" on this resolution saying, "We've got people here who think Tony Fitzgerald is a communist dupe - people from the heartland of Chinchilla and places like that."[92] Such frank recognition of the continuing power of pietism won Whebell few friends. The synod, meeting in October 1989 before the election was announced,

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[89] *CM* 13.12.1988.
[90] *CM* 10.10.1989.
[91] Gold Coast *Bulletin* 11.10.1989.
[92] *CM* 10.10.1989.

subsequently passed an insipid resolution calling on all political parties to give effect to the findings on electoral matters of the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission.[93] At least the Queensland Methodist Church in 1976 had sufficient courage to call for one vote one value.[94]

If the response from the major denominations to the Fitzgerald process was muted, the silence from the neo-pentecostals who had supported Bjelke-Petersen was deafening. Yet, Ian Henderson, promoted by Cooper to be Minister for Justice, and Pastor Max Taylor of the Christian Outreach Centre, publicly supported the Logos Foundation's attempt to sidetrack the political agenda away from the reform process during the 1989 Queensland state election campaign, in what was perhaps pietism's "last hurrah."[95] Nearly two years after Bjelke-Petersen's resignation from the premiership, in the Queensland state election held in December 1989, the electorate resoundingly rejected those whom it seemed to regard as responsible for two decades of unmitigated hypocrisy.

Had Bjelke-Petersen a more comprehensive understanding of the inter-testamental and New Testament times, he would

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[93] Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod, *Minutes of the Thirteenth Synod* (1989) 62.
[94] Queensland Methodist Conference, *Minutes* (1976) 66.
[95] *CM* 6.11.1989.

have known that crucifixion was frequently the fate of messianic figures. In antiquity, crucifixion was a slow death. Bjelke-Petersen's political crucifixion began with his failure to make a triumphal entry into Canberra. Then his hitherto faithful disciples began to desert him, after he attempted to remove some of their number from Cabinet, and shortly afterwards he was deposed as premier. A year later he was brought to defend his honour and reputation before Commissioner Fitzgerald and scourged by questions from the barristers, or at least that was how some of his supporters saw it. One correspondent wrote to the *Courier-Mail* in December 1987:

> As Labor's campaign of political vilification succeeds in Queensland, why am I reminded of the crowds outside the temple shouting,"Crucify Him"?[96]

Bjelke-Petersen's deposition from the premiership left him with a sense that his life's mission remained unaccomplished. There was no thought of peaceful retirement to Bethany. Bjelke-Petersen spoke of imminent travel overseas, of a new career in business.[97] Florence Bjelke-Petersen articulated this in phraseology frequently used by both herself and her husband:

> The Lord sees fit to give and the Lord sees fit to take away. And he has just closed the political door on Joh and now he will open another, for that his his way.[98]

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[96] *CM* 1.12.1987.
[97] *CM* 2.12.1987.
[98] *Australian* 2.12.1987.

Oblivious to the irony that his reputation had been ruined by revelations of police corruption protecting those things that as a pietist he most eschewed - prostitution, gambling and drugs - Bjelke-Petersen warned in his resignation speech of moral decay ahead under his Roman Catholic successor. A pietist to the end, the dualism of that world view shining through, Bjelke-Petersen told journalists:

> They're cluttering up the values of our young people. There is light and darkness. There is right and wrong. Politics is about what is good and what is right. About Christian belief.[999]

Thus far, such pietism has been assumed to be not just the idiosyncratic possession of a poor farm boy who made it to the premier's chair, but also a widely shared orthopraxy within the religious culture of Queensland. From orthopraxy to civil religion was but a short step.

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[999] *Australian* 2.12.1987.

CHAPTER 20
FAITH IN THE SUNSHINE STATE?
THE EMERGENCE OF CIVIL RELIGION IN QUEENSLAND.

I love Queensland. I love its people. I've given it absolutely everything. And Flo has too.

Joh Bjelke-Petersen upon his resignation as Premier of Queensland in 1987.[1]

Secularization in Australian history has been nothing but the displacement of certain sacred objects, beliefs and customs by others.

Historian Richard Ely 1981.[2]

I.

Despite the influence of Lutheran Pastor Herb Schmidt during Bjelke-Petersen's early adulthood, Bjelke-Petersen cannot be described as a classical Lutheran.[3] Nor was he a classical fundamentalist, much as he made common cause with the fundamentalists on a number of issues of public policy during his premiership.[4] He is best described as an evangelical pietist and thus the product of a long tradition within the religious culture of Queensland.

Both classical Lutheranism and classical fundamentalism contain a strong element of confessionalism, which is one of the characteristics of that Protestant tradition which had its origins in the sixteenth and seventeenth

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[1] *CM* 2.12.1987.
[2] R.Ely,"Secularization and the sacred in Australian history," *Historical Studies*, 19 (Oct 1981): 564.
[3] For Schmidt's influence on Bjelke-Petersen see Chapter 9.
[4] See Chapter 16.

centuries. Both classical Lutheranism and classical fundamentalism require commitment and adherence to a set of intellectual propositions in a manner at odds not only with Bjelke-Petersen's personal spiritual formation, as described in Section 2, but with the rest of his life experience as well. Indeed Florence Bjelke-Petersen, with her background in evangelical Presbyterianism, was more likely to have adopted fundamentalist views than her husband. Bjelke-Petersen was little interested in issues of biblical inspiration or interpretation. One of his few references to such issues was during the controversy surrounding the visit of the World Council of Churches team to investigate the condition of Aborigines in 1981. On that occasion he said:

> The ICCC [International Council of Christian Churches] believes in the Bible from Genesis to Revelations (sic), while the WCC interprets the Biblical message to give a political orientation and literally another gospel.[53]

This is an isolated instance and Bjelke-Petersen's roots in the pietistic tradition are more evident in this exchange between Bjelke-Petersen and theologian David Millikan on ABC-TV in July 1988, after Bjelke-Petersen's deposition from the premiership:

> Millikan: Sir Joh, you sound as though you're expressing classical Lutheran teaching ...there is the world of the church and the gospel and then there is the world of politics. ... Do you see ... politics as a sort of separate entity

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[53] *Life & Times* (22.7.1981.): 4.

> you step into, and then you live as best you can according to the principles of the world?
>
> Bjelke-Petersen: Well in this world, in this life that we have, there are as you might say; as you saught to indicate; sort of two ways where you can live a life where you, well, enjoy yourself to the utmost in every area that you can and you forget about that life's short, it's real and earnest... and then there's the other where you seek to live a life by God's grace, help, strengthening through forgiveness and belief in Jesus Christ as one's Saviour, then we seek to live that way.[64]

In the question, Millikan was probing Bjelke-Petersen for some expression of the classical Lutheran doctrine of the two kingdoms, as outlined in Chapter 2. From his answer, Bjelke-Petersen clearly did not comprehend what lay behind the question. He answered the question from a pietistic worldview; in terms of the difference between living within God's saving grace and living without. This interview is important evidence in reaching two conclusions. First, that Bjelke-Petersen did not operate out of the classical Lutheran understanding of the two kingdoms, and secondly, that Bjelke-Petersen was not a fundamentalist.

For to classify Bjelke-Petersen as a fundamentalist is to misunderstand Bjelke-Petersen's own religious formation, and particularly the influence of his parents. The faith formation of his parents predated fundamentalism, and no evidence can be found of fundamentalist influences on

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[64] *Compass*, ABC-TV, 3.7.1988.

Bjelke-Petersen through the pastors of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church. Bjelke-Petersen's objections to the MACOS and SEMP curriculum materials, human relationships courses in schools and the availability of condoms may well have been a product of his pietistic concern for moral reformation,[7] and are therefore consistent with his objections to the liquor trade and gambling in the nineteen fifties, rather than an objection to the 'modernism' of serular humanism they are alleged to represent. Dollar described historic fundamentalism as,

> the literal exposition of all the affirmations and attitudes of the Bible and the militant exposure of all non-Biblical affirmations and attitudes.[8]

Bjelke-Petersen's moralism was not of this order and was more likely to be simply an extension of the concerns held by the evangelical pietists of the nineteenth century: Sabbatarianism, 'social purity' and temperance, rather than a stand in favour of a fundamentalist principle. Of fundamentalism generally in Australia, Parker observed that, "because of the strong influence of pietism, it [fundamentalism] has made no impact on theological thought."[9]

To present Bjelke-Petersen as a fundamentalist is also to risk misunderstanding the religious culture of

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[7] Stoeffler 10.
[8] Dollar xv.
[9] Parker iv.

Queensland, which in its turn helps explain Bjelke-Petersen's extraordinary and often unpredicted political success. For in political terms his affinity was not simply with a small group of religious separatists, but with a broader constituency who shares his pietistic world view based around a code of personal morality; some of them without a great deal of attachment to the core of religious faith from which such a world view developed.

The dissolution in the mid-nineteen seventies of the pietist monolith that was Queensland Christianity since the nineteenth century as outlined in Chapter 5, caused concern to Bjelke-Petersen, and his political supporters, especially Charles Porter, even though their own actions compounded the fracture.[109]

But the damage was contained by the emergence of neo-pietism in the neo-pentecostal movement of the nineteen eighties. Although this emerged as a result of factors largely beyond the control of either Bjelke-Petersen or the major churches - who suffered most from the depredations of the neo-pentecostals - this neo-pietism provided the National Party with assistance in gaining and retaining power within its own right in the 1983 and 1986 state elections.

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[109] In this writer's view, Porter has been given insufficient credit for his influence of Bjelke-Petersen's political strategy in the period 1974-1980.

Because Bjelke-Petersen was neither a classical Lutheran nor a classical fundamentalist, and thus not strongly confessionalist, he was open to the blandishments of civil religion. Richey and Jones have defined five types of civil religion: 'folk religion', 'religious nationalism', 'the transcendent universal religion of the nation', 'democratic faith' and finally 'Protestant civic piety'.[11] It is the last-mentioned that best describes a phenomenon that emerged in Queensland during the Bjelke-Petersen years. 'Protestant civic piety' is described as the secularized form of Puritanism and revivalism. Its features include "Protestant moralism, individualism, activism ("deeds not creeds"), pragmatism, and the grand motif of 'missionizing' the world."[12] To some historians Protestant civic piety also contains,

> religiously embedded notions of Anglo-American superiority rooted in Protestant theories of race, and Protestant versions of national destiny.[13]

Because of this Protestant civil piety has been described as "an uncivil civil religion."[14]

In the Australian context, through what process would traditional evangelical pietism give way to civil religion in the form of 'Protestant civic piety'? Richard Ely's observations about 'secularization' and

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[11] Russell Richey and Donald Jones, *American civil religion* (New York: Harper, 1974) 14-18.
[12] Richey and Jones 17.
[13] Richey and Jones 18.
[14] Richey and Jones 18.

'sacralization' in Australian history become pertinent at this point. Ely's argument is that those whom he categorizes as "religious historians" - i.e. those who have studied the history of religion in Australia and who have, he observes somewhat gratuitously, a direct personal link to one of the country's major religious traditions - have portrayed the fundamental polarity in Australian history as being between, "the imperatives of godliness and the lure of worldliness."[15] The contribution of these historians who, "regretfully acknowledge secularization,"[16] has been to trace the displacement of sacred values by secular. However, Ely points out that the converse of secularization has been the sacralization of other values represented by events and movements within Australian history. He cites the labour movement, Australian nationalism and Australian Rules football as examples of these "secular substitutes".[17]

In essence he argues that, "secularization in Australian history has been nothing but the displacement of certain sacred objects, beliefs and customs by others."[18] So, in addition to offering a critique of 'religious' historiography, Ely provides historical examples of the process of sacralization; the process through which the

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[15] Ely 553.
[16] Ely 555.
[17] Ely 556.
[18] Ely 564.

traditional pietism of the religious culture was transformed into the civil religion of 'Protestant civic piety'.

How did such a transition take place? The amorphous nature of pietism, the fact that it had, to recall Stoeffler's description, "no one system of theology, no one integrating doctrine, no one particular type of polity, no one liturgy, no geographical homogeneity,"[19] made it the ideal platform to carry the emerging civil religion. To this should be added the trans-sectarian character of pietism in Queensland coupled with the weakness of ecclesiastical structures so inhibited by distance, the lack of confessionalist influences within Protestantism. Indeed, it is possible to argue that had the influence of fundamentalism been greater, then progress down the path towards the civil religion of Protestant civic piety might have been slower.

From the political culture, such a civil religion drew upon state chauvinism, but more importantly on the underlying materialism of the colony and the state. As Ross Fitzgerald has demonstrated in *From the Dreaming to 1915*,[20] there existed from the earliest days of free settlement at Moreton Bay, a desire among individuals of

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[19] Stoeffler 13.
[20] see Fitzgerald, *From the Dreaming*, Chapter 4, "Development: the exploitation of the land and its resources".

all classes to develop the colony and attain wealth. This is revealed in the character of pastoral expansion, the discovery of gold, the development of the plantation regime and the rise of the labour movement. A commitment to 'development' constituted the core of the political culture.

Finally, how was this form of civil religion, this Protestant civic piety, expressed in Queensland? Here are three illustrations from the pen of Bjelke-Petersen during the nineteen eighties. Each was written upon the occasion of a traditional Christian festival - Easter or Christmas - and each was published in the chronicle of Bjelke-Petersen's heartland, the *South Burnett Times*.

At Christmas, in both 1982 and 1983, Bjelke-Petersen referred to the blessings of Divine Providence on the Sunshine State. In 1982, he wrote:

> It is a biblical principle that God governs the fortunes of the nations as they fit His divine plan, and He is not selfish in His blessings when the deserts are warranted. We in Queensland have a greater share of the good things in life than most people in the world. We have much to thank the Lord of Hosts for, and share the hope that such blessings will continue.[21]

The following Christmas, the theme of thanksgiving was expanded and the links between democracy and development were made explicit:

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[21] *SBT* 22.12.1982.

> The Sunshine State has a traditional form of democratic government which believes people should be allowed to develop their talents unhampered by oppressive government regulation and bureaucratic interference. These physical blessings are the result of hard work and wise decision-making...
>
> Queenslanders have much to celebrate this Christmas and much for which to thank Providence. Development continues to stimulate growth in Queensland and to attract people to the Sunshine State.[22]

At Easter 1982, Bjelke-Petersen focused on the theme of sacrifice, and offered this message:

> The Christian festival of Easter has traditionally been associated with sacrifice - the sacrifice of the Lord and Saviour for a world astray.
>
> This tradition of sacrifice has long inspired the pioneers of western civilization and was a major characteristic of our early settlers and pioneers in Queensland.
>
> The inspired Christian message, and the example set by Christ gave many an early pioneer the courage to overcome harsh environmental and economic circumstances, and provided the inspiration for perseverance and eventual accomplishment.
>
> That early sacrifice is today reaping huge benefits for Queensland and its people. Our achievements here today are founded on much hard work and courageous pioneering struggle. The Sunshine Sate has benefited from a human dynamo tradition which has been propelled by a desire to get things done - to achieve and accomplish.
>
> ...Queenslanders today do not have to carry the burdens or face the extreme sacrifices of their pioneering ancestors, but they must pull together and work hard to build an even better and brighter future...[23]

This is not Christian orthodoxy, but the new civil religion sprouting from the stubble and husks of the old.

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[22] *SBT* 21.12.1983.
[23] *SBT* 14.4.1982.

A faith in the land and its people; a faith in the Sunshine State. A faith of which Bjelke-Petersen became the proselytizing apostle; a faith whose rituals were the opening of new mines, new ports, power stations, pipelines and officeblocks; rituals projected nightly onto the television screens of the people of Queensland during the nineteen seventies and nineteen eighties; a faith whose message was transmitted by a largely uncritical and often sympathetic local mass media; a faith whose offering plates were brown paper bags; an evangelical faith into which Bjelke-Petersen sought to proselytize the whole Australian nation in 1987, through the "Joh for PM" campaign. A faith which drew on the inherent piety of rural and provincial Queenslanders, and which struck chords with Catholics disaffected by the seeming modernism and indifference to communism of the Australian Labor Party, who came to the National Party after the collapse of the Democratic Labor Party. A faith whose heretics were dissident unionists, environmentalists, Aborigines and civil libertarians along with some Christians. If this be so, what then is the future of this faith, since its prophet was sent into exile at Bethany?

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